# New Jersey's Strategic Plan for Early Education and Care

**October 2012**

**Acknowledgments**

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Members of the New Jersey Council for Young Children (see Appendix A for list)
The Committees of the New Jersey Council for Young Children (see Appendix B for list)
New Jersey Department of Education
New Jersey Department of Human Services
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New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development
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New Jersey Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NJACCRRA)
New Jersey Early Care and Education Alliance (NJECEA)
Statewide Parents' Advocacy Network (SPAN)
Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Initiative (NJ Parent Link)

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# New Jersey Council for Young Children: Strategic Plan 2012

## Introduction

In 2010, the New Jersey Council for Young Children was created by Executive Order to serve as the Governor's State Advisory Council for Early Education and Care as authorized under the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007. The Council's first strategic plan set the stage for the initial work for each of its six committees and established overall goals for the three-year grant period. Since that time, the Council has made steady progress toward creating a more aligned system of early care and education to improve the lives of New Jersey's young children and their families and help ensure that they enter school ready to succeed. This strategic plan proposes a revised roadmap to creating a coordinated state system of early education and care that will contribute to the well-being of all New Jersey's children and families, and especially those most vulnerable.

## A Snapshot of New Jersey's Young Children

The challenges facing New Jersey's infants, young children and families make the charge of the New Jersey Council for Young Children and all of the state's early childhood stakeholders more critical than ever before. It is imperative that our programs and resources be aligned to ensure that children and families have access to the high quality early experiences that we know, and research confirms, contribute to school success and family well-being.

Economically, New Jersey's families are struggling much like the rest of the nation. Nearly 33 percent of all of the state's children, or 619,000 children 18 and under, live in a low-income household, representing an increase of 14 percent since 2006. The number of children living in a family where no parent has regular, full-time, year-round employment increased to 27 percent in 2010, up from 25 percent in 2009.

Family structure across the state is changing as well. According to the National Center for Children in Poverty, there were 465,583 families with 661,768 young children (under age six) living in New Jersey in 2010. During the same time period, more than 30 percent of all families were headed by just one parent.

According to the 2011 National Kids Count, children who are identified as African-American, Hispanic, Asian, or a combination of two or more races, represented approximately 50 percent of the nation's child population, with 14 percent reported as African-American and 23 percent reported as Hispanic/Latino. The 2012 New Jersey Kids Count report reflects these same trends in the state of New Jersey. Among children under the age of 18, there is a strong correlation between family race and ethnicity, and living in poor and low-income families. In 2009, the

National Center for Children in Poverty reported that 29 percent of young African-American children and 28 percent of young Hispanic/Latino children lived in low-income families (incomes up to 200 percent of the federal poverty level) compared to seven percent of young Caucasian children.

Another group of children whose challenging culture and lifestyle often goes unrecognized is infants and young children in military and veteran families. In New Jersey, there are approximately 33,000 active duty service members and nearly 26,000 National Guard and Reserves. The Department of Defense reports that nearly 42 percent of all military families have children under the age of five years. Military families relocate on an average of every two years. Their children experience the stresses associated with deployment, separation, and in some cases parental injury or death. New Jersey's primary instillation is Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, which represents Air Force, Army, and Naval personnel and families. It is also home to the US Coast Guard and members of the New Jersey National Guard and Reserves who are represented in virtually every county in our state. While military families are generally a competent and resilient group, the current circumstances of war and difficulties for veterans returning to civilian life contribute to challenging circumstances for infants and young children in military and veteran families.

New Jersey has seen some positive changes in the field of child health. Both the number and percentage of New Jersey's children without health insurance have significantly declined since 2006, dropping 32 and 31 percent, respectively. Emphasis on oral health care has also resulted in benefits for young children. Eligibility for children receiving dental services through NJ FamilyCare rose 86 percent while preventative dental care rose 99 percent. Progress has also been made on other measures of child health such as reduced infant/child mortality rates, decline in lead poisoning and decreases in children living with asthma.

While progress in the area of health is significant, many serious health issues remain. Access to prenatal care continues to be a challenge. The New Jersey Department of Health Center for Health Statistics online data system (NJSHAD) reports that in 2009, 65.3% of infants born to Black, non-Hispanic mothers and 70.3% of infants born to Hispanic (of any race) mothers received early first trimester prenatal care compared to 87.8% of infants born to White, non-Hispanic mothers and 87.8% of infants born to Asian/Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic mothers. The number of babies born with significant low birth weight persists. NJSHAD data reports that in 2009, 13.0% of Black, non-Hispanic infants were born with low birth weight (less than 2,500 grams) compared to 7.0% of White, non-Hispanic infants, 7.0% of Hispanic (of any race) infants, and 8.5% of Asian/Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic infants.

In early childhood education, New Jersey remains a national leader. More children are attending preschool and full-day kindergarten than ever before, and New Jersey has a higher proportion of children attending preschool than the national average. Public preschool enrollment has increased by four percent, providing more opportunities for children,

particularly low-income children, to attend full-day preschool. In 2010, 72% of the children in the state, ages three to five, attended preschool or kindergarten compared to the national average of 40 percent.

**Why New Jersey Should Focus on Coordinated Early Education and Care**

The New Jersey Council for Young Children believes in equal opportunity for all of the state's children, and that opportunity begins with high quality early education and care, including high quality prenatal care. If we want all children to enter kindergarten with the skills, knowledge and dispositions they need to be successful, we must ensure that they have access to high quality early care and education. This is especially critical for the state's most vulnerable children, who often fall behind their peers well before even entering kindergarten. New Jersey has already made great strides toward reaching many of the state's children with high needs, but too many young children continue to lack access to high quality early learning and development experiences.

New Jersey's high quality preschool program provides the foundation for a comprehensive, coordinated system for young children from infancy to age eight. Its core components are essential to the development of this comprehensive early education system. State-funded full-day preschool is available to all three and four-year-old children in some of the most disadvantaged school districts in the state. It is based on a high quality standard, among the best in the country, which sets the benchmarks necessary for positive outcomes for children. Teacher credentials, class size, student-teacher ratio, facilities and social and emotional needs are all governed by this standard, which applies in every preschool setting – - in-district, Head Start or community-based centers. Statewide, the majority of children in the program – almost sixty percent – are in preschool classes in Head Start or community-based programs.

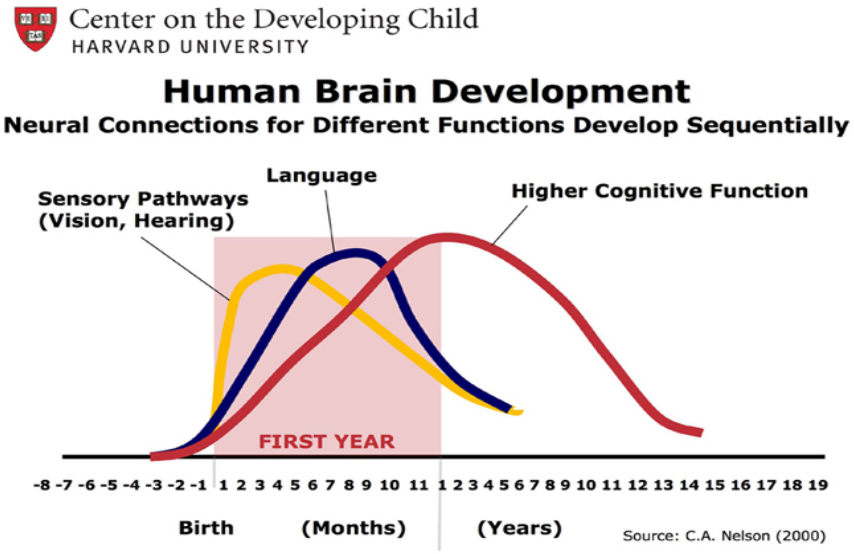
The success of New Jersey's preschool program is the result of the investment the state has made to ensuring educational equity for all children, starting with its youngest citizens. However, there are more than 30,000 low income three-and four-year-old children living in communities that do not receive state funding for high quality preschool programs. It is critical that New Jersey address this issue through an expansion of the high quality program and/or through the creation of a system of quality improvement. It also speaks to the need for similar investment in other areas of early learning, ensuring that all young children have the opportunity to experience a high quality early education that prepares them for success in school and in life.

It is well established that intensive, high quality early experiences can close much of the achievement gap for children in families with low income. This substantially increases their

school success and produces a host of life-long benefits, including increased school achievement and social and economic success as adults (Barnett, S., 1996; Ramey, C. T., & Campbell, F. A., 1984; Ramey, C. T., et. al, 2000; Reynolds, A. J., 2000). We have ample evidence that New Jersey's high quality preschool program is producing these gains and that the gains are being sustained:

- Achievement gap cut in half for preschool attendees
- Effects persisting in the early grades including decreased grade repetition (Frede, E. et al, 2009)

In addition to research on the positive impact of preschool, there is a body of evidence that benefits to children would be even greater if their earliest experiences better supported the critical areas of development (Nelson, C.A., 2000). The chart below illustrates the sequence of neural connections, showing that sensory and language pathways form largely during a baby's first year, and that cognitive connections peak from 10 months to 5 years. Focusing on the quality of early experiences for children as early as possible will help to ensure that they are equipped with the skills and competencies necessary to succeed.




**The Structure of Early Education and Care in New Jersey**

The bulk of early education and care services for infants and young children in New Jersey are administered from four state departments (see Chart A below). The Department of Education administers the state's preschool program, Title One, and preschool special education programs (IDEA Part B). The Department of Human Services oversees the Child Care Resources and Referral Agencies, child care subsidies, and First Steps initiative, among other programs. The Department of Children and Families is focused on family-oriented initiatives like Family

Success Centers, Home Visiting and Strengthening Families in Early Care and Education, while the Department of Health has oversight of programs designed for children with health and developmental risks like early intervention (IDEA Part C), Child Lead Poisoning, and Special Child Health Services (and others).

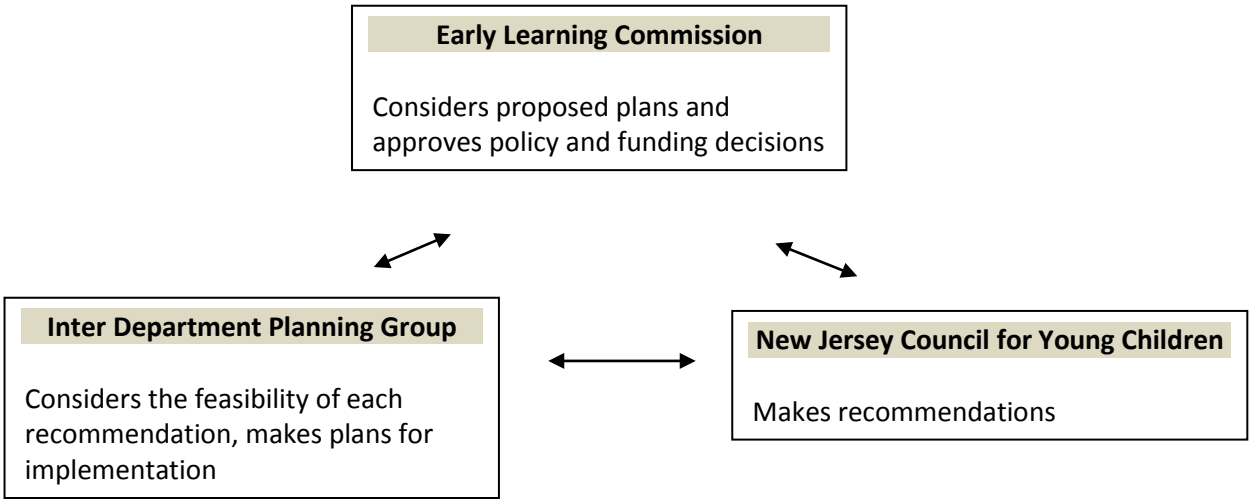
While each program described in Chart A is valuable on its own, the services and programs among the departments do not necessarily connect. Each department uses its own set of program standards, outreach and communication strategies and data systems to track progress. A family in a former Abbott preschool center, for example, may not be aware of the ability to connect to other families at the local Family Success Center, or how to get help with their infant through Home Visiting programs.

**Chart A: Current Structure of Early Childhood Services**

| Department of Education (DOE) | Department of Human Services (DHS) | Department of Children & Families (DCF) | Department of Health (DOH) |
|---|---|---|---|
| State Preschool | Subsidized child care | Child Welfare | IDEA Part C (Early Intervention) |
| Head Start Collaboration | Wraparound care | Child Care Licensing | Special Child Health Services |
| Teacher Credential & Licensing | NJ First Steps Infant/Toddler Initiative | Home Visiting Program | Home Visiting Program |
| IDEA Part B (Preschool Special Education) | Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies | Strengthening Families through Early Care & Education | Maternal and Child Health Services |
| Federal Title I and other Federal Programs | Workforce Registry | Family Success Centers | Immunizations |
| Regional Achievement Centers | Family Worker Outreach | Family Child Care Provider Registration (voluntary) | Childhood Lead Poisoning |
| | TANF | NJ Children's Trust Fund | Indoor Environments Program |
| | SNAP (food stamps) | Federal Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Funds | |
| | NJ Medicaid | | |
| | NJ FamilyCare | | |

To address the issue of disconnected services and initiatives, three entities are working closely together to be strategic in leveraging and coordinating the standards, programs, and services. The New Jersey Council for Young Children, the Inter Department Planning Group and the Early Learning Commission work together to move the early education and care agenda forward. The

Council is the group that collects the background information about optimal programs and services, develops materials, makes policy recommendations, and sets the early education and care agenda. The Council is made up of the state's early education and care stakeholders across disciplines of education, health, and human services. The Inter Department Planning Group consists of the administrators from each of the state's departments with oversight of programs and services for children from pregnancy to age eight. This group considers the feasibility of each recommendation, makes plans for implementation and ultimately carries out the plan, in collaboration with other state organizations and agencies. Finally, the Early Learning Commission is made up of the Commissioners of the Departments of Children and Families, Education, Health, and Human Services, as well as the Council's Chair. The Chair brings Council recommendations to the Early Learning Commission for its consideration. Ultimately, the Commission makes the final decision about funding allocations and significant policy decisions. Each of these three entities is described in more detail in the paragraphs below.




**The New Jersey Council for Young Children**

The New Jersey Council for Young Children is funded to align and improve New Jersey's numerous and complex early childhood programs and initiatives into a coordinated system of early care and education programs and services for infants, toddlers and young children from birth to age eight. The Governor-appointed Council is authorized by the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, and received 1.7 million dollars for its three-year grant period. A list of Council members can be found in Appendix A.

The 24-member Council is in, but not of, the Department of Education, and represents all state agencies with oversight of programs for families and children from birth to age eight, including the Departments of Education, Human Services, Health, Labor and Workforce Development, and Children and Families. Head Start agencies and organizations, advocacy groups, child care organizations, school districts, universities and foundations are also represented.

In its application for federal funds, the Council created a plan to:

- Develop a coordinated, statewide system of early childhood programs and services with a data information sharing system that meets the early care and education needs of infants, young children and their families throughout the state, from birth through age eight
- Identify and improve services for infants, young children and families by coordinating outreach efforts across state agencies, school districts and community and faith-based organizations including, but not limited to, underserved populations
- Develop a coherent set of early learning and development standards that address all areas of development for children aged birth through eight that lead to positive outcomes for infants, young children and their families
- Strengthen the preparation and ongoing professional development of all early education and care professionals to optimize their positive impact on the development and learning of young children, aged birth through eight
- Identify and plan a system of comprehensive, aligned program quality improvement processes and standards for early care and education from birth through age eight, including a tiered Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS)
- Provide information to help the public recognize the value of early care and education for the well-being of infants and children ages birth through eight and for the state as a whole

Council members are appointed for three-year terms, and vacancies are filled by gubernatorial appointment. There are currently four vacant slots with appointments under review. The Council is chaired by Dr. Ellen Wolock, Administrator of the New Jersey Department of Education's Division of Early Childhood Education, and the Council recently voted to have Laura Morana, Superintendent of Red Bank Public Schools, serve as Vice Chair.

**The Commission for Early Learning and Development**

The Early Learning Commission was established by Executive Order in 2011 as part of New Jersey's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant application. In an effort to create a cohesive approach to serving young children and their families, the state submitted an ambitious plan that integrated the effective models of services across various state and local organizations. Within the plan, the Early Learning Commission was instituted as part of a governance structure to improve supports for families and their infants and young children.

While New Jersey was not a recipient of the second round of Race to the Top funding, the New Jersey Commission for Early Learning and Development was still established to facilitate alignment of the state's early learning and development programs and funding streams. See Chart A for the programs and funding sources found in each agency.

Comprised of the Commissioners of the Departments of Education, Health, Children and Families and Human Services and the Chair of the New Jersey Council for Young Children, the Early Learning Commission's charge is to:

| |
|---|
| (1) Review the existing programs and budgets across state departments |
| (2) Identify ways to support the implementation of the state's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), Grow NJ |
| (3) Enhance supports across all domains of learning and development for early childhood educators by developing and disseminating best practices and training modules |
| (4) Coordinate social, health and family supports for children with high needs and children enrolled in early learning and development programs including, integrating data systems maintained by the Departments of Education, Children and Families, Health, and Human Services (see CHART A) |
| (5) Regularly consult with the New Jersey Council for Young Children and the Coordinating Council for Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) as each task is carried out |

**The Inter Department Planning Group**

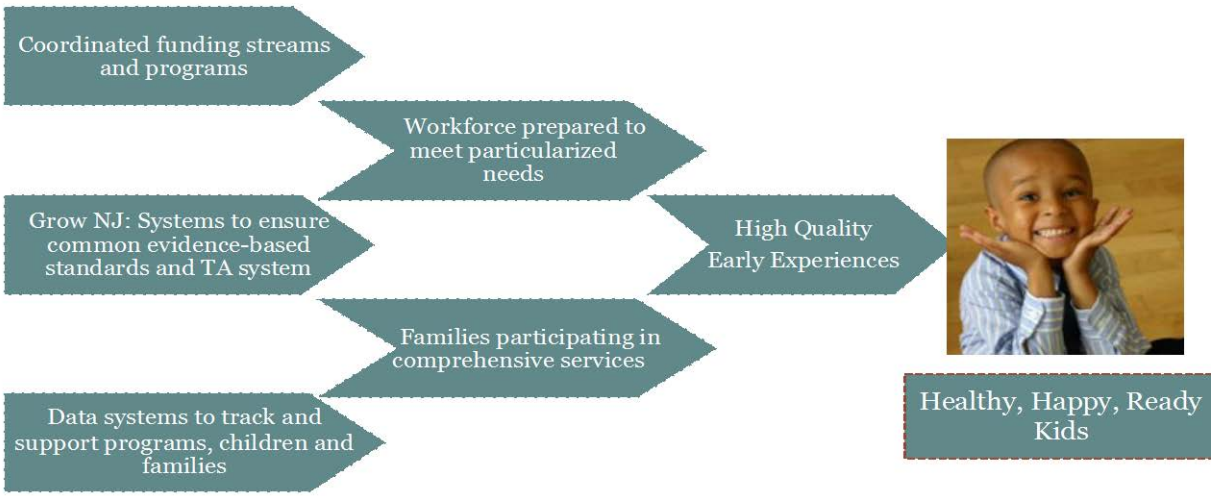
The administrators of each funding stream and program from the four departments, as well as other relevant departments, meet monthly to plan ways to coordinate work as well as to consider the feasibility of each Council recommendation, and make the necessary plans for implementation. The goal of the Inter Department Planning Group is to integrate programs and services that are offered across our agencies, as described in Chart A. As New Jersey implements the initiatives described in this strategic plan, each agency will contribute its unique resources. An example of this collaboration is an agreement between the Head Start Collaboration Office and Department of Children and Families, Division of Prevention and Community Partnerships in which Family Success Centers will facilitate the transition of families from Head Start to school (Appendix D).

This inter department collaboration will be essential to the implementation of New Jersey's Quality Rating Improvement System, Grow NJ. Each department will be responsible for specific aspects of the implementation, from the technical assistance that is provided through the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (Department of Human Services) to the Training of Trainers modules (all agencies).

If the inter agency work is carried out successfully, New Jersey will have a coordinated system of programs and funding streams that support the implementation of common, evidence-based standards and an aligned system of professional development. Each agency's data systems will connect and be able to answer critical questions about efficacy.

Families will have access to essential health and family programs and services, the workforce will be prepared, and high quality early experiences will be in place for all age groups and settings. The prize will be healthy, happy, children who are thriving.

## A Common, Coordinated Focus Will Maximize our Impact



**Strategic Plan Sections**

The New Jersey Council for Young Children has identified focus areas that support greater access to high quality early experiences that optimize all aspects of learning and development in a way that is responsive to New Jersey's culturally and linguistically diverse population from pregnancy to age eight. Central to the development of New Jersey's coordinated, high quality system is Grow NJ, where the path to achieve common standards of quality for all areas is found.

The work of the Council is conducted by its many committee members (see Appendix B for a list). In the sections that follow, each committee provides recommendations, and describes the progress of its work, including the current status and next steps for each. The Strategic Plan aligns with the Council's goals to address workforce development, early learning and program standards, targeted population outreach/communications, coordinated data system development, program quality improvement through implementation of a Quality Rating and Improvement System, and infancy and early childhood mental health. Recommendations for the remaining grant period and a plan for implementation beyond the grant period are included, and are currently under consideration by the Early Learning Commission. The following sections are included:

- Section 1: Program Improvement/Quality Rating and Improvement System (Grow NJ)
- Section 2: Coordinated Data Systems
- Section 3: Learning and Development Standards
- Section 4: Workforce Preparation
- Section 5: Coordinated and Targeted Outreach/Communication
- Section 6: Infancy and Early Childhood Mental Health

**Committee Collaboration**

The overarching goal of the New Jersey Council for Young Children is to increase the quality of early learning and development experiences for the infants and young children of New Jersey in a coordinated system of comprehensive services. Each Council committee is charged with a different aspect of this goal. However, the success of each committee, and ultimately of the Council, is dependent upon effective collaboration and communication among committees, and integration of each task. Each committee works individually and together to improve early childhood program quality throughout the state of New Jersey.

Central to the Council's effort to design a system to create and sustain high quality, is the refinement and implementation of New Jersey's Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS), Grow NJ (Section 1). Much of the Program Improvement Committee's work is centered on

improving Grow NJ as a tool, while also determining how best to introduce a QRIS into the varied configuration of New Jersey's early education and care programs. The Program Improvement Committee works closely with the Council's other committees to ensure that Grow NJ is an effective tool, containing the most appropriate, and research-based practices to support all domains and needs of infants, young children and families.

Each of the other committee tasks is connected to Grow NJ. The Learning and Development Standards Committee (Section 3) developed *New Jersey's Birth to Three Early Learning Standards*, which are integrated into the steps of the Grow NJ system, and will be introduced as part of Grow NJ's technical assistance. The Workforce Development Committee (Section 4) will use Grow NJ as part of a system to ensure coordinated, aligned professional development for the early childhood workforce. The committee is developing systems to assess workforce needs and to provide consistent, high quality higher education and professional development across settings.

The Infancy and Early Childhood Mental Health Committee (Section 6) is working to cultivate a network of professionals to provide professional development to early learning and development practitioners about supporting the social and emotional needs of infants, young children and their families. These professionals will support Grow NJ by providing training to early care and education providers to better serve and accommodate mental health needs.

The Coordinated and Targeted Outreach Committee (Section 5) will design strategies to communicate the benefits of Grow NJ participation as well as ensure that providers and schools have tools to maximize participation. Widespread participation in Grow NJ will hinge upon effective communication about the importance of a QRIS for measuring and improving quality, as well as the benefit to programs in terms of resources and professional development.

The Coordinated and Targeted Outreach Committee will also design strategies to help families recognize the value of choosing high quality early learning programs and the impact that high quality early learning experiences can have for young children. The Committee is developing materials to help families understand the role of Grow NJ and how the selection of a high quality site can influence a child's developmental trajectory.

The Committee will also work to ensure that families are fully aware of the huge array of options available to support their infant and young child's health, well-being, and early learning and care needs –prenatal/pediatric health, home visiting, Early Head Start/Head Start, child care centers, preschools, early intervention/special child health, family child care providers, family/friend/neighbor (FFH) care, or other support from Family Success Centers, social service programs, etc. Grow NJ will ultimately be connected with a central intake system for families and with family-led County Councils for Young Children.

The implementation of Grow NJ cannot be effectively carried out without being situated in a coordinated data system. The Council's Coordinated Data Systems Committee is consequently working to improve coordination among the state's many early childhood data systems. Data systems within several state agencies currently collect vast amounts of information about the many programs serving children from pregnancy to age eight. However, few of these data systems have the capacity to link with other data systems to provide a full picture of the state's early learning and development programs. The Council's Coordinated Data Systems Committee is working to improve coordination among the state's many early childhood data systems. Once data systems are integrated and include Grow NJ rating information, families and other stakeholders will be able to measure quality across early learning and development programs. In addition to using data to assess the quality of early education and care programs and to make improvements to those programs, the coordination of New Jersey's early childhood data systems will allow us to see the longitudinal impact of high quality early learning experiences on all children in the state.

## Section 1: Program Improvement/Quality Rating and Improvement System (Grow NJ)

The Program Improvement Committee has been focused on creating a system of quality improvement for early education and care settings for children from birth to five. A Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) is a sequential and systematic way to assess, improve and communicate the quality of early education and care programs. Families become informed consumers of their children's early education and care options, accountability is enhanced, and providers have a clear roadmap to quality improvement. Most importantly, a QRIS provides a common set of evidence-based standards that link to optimal learning and development of young children. Overall, half of the states in the nation and the District of Columbia now operate a statewide QRIS and nearly all other states are planning or piloting a QRIS.

Under the leadership of the Program Improvement Committee, the goal of implementing a statewide QRIS, Grow NJ, will effectively connect the overall goals of the Council's larger strategic plan to improve the quality of care for all children.

A uniform set of evidence-based program standards will be used. To support quality improvement, Grow NJ's professional development and technical assistance modules will address curriculum and assessment needs, family engagement strategies, health/safety practices and a nationally-recognized early childhood mental health model proposed by the Infancy and Early Childhood Mental Health Committee. Participating programs in Grow NJ will link with the state's early childhood workforce registry to establish a single, reliable source of data on the education, professional development and experience of the early childhood workforce in order to better inform program needs and resource allocation. In collaboration with the Learning and Development Standards Committee, Grow NJ will encompass research-based early learning standards for infants and young children that are inclusive of cultural backgrounds, various home languages and abilities.

In partnership with the Workforce Preparatopn Committee, standards for the required credentials and career lattice for early childhood professionals across all program levels will enable colleges and universities to design education and preparation programs that promote a highly qualified workforce.

In tandem with the work of the Data Committee, the capacity to connect child and program data across state-funded programs with Grow NJ ratings will allow for ongoing assessment of the efficacy of the state's quality improvement efforts as a whole, as well as for individual programs in need of additional support.

Finally, the Targeted and Coordinated Outreach/ Communication Committee will use the Grow NJ ratings to inform families as consumers, increase access to high quality programs for underserved populations, educate policymakers and communicate key messages to the general

public that demonstrate how ongoing investments in the early care and education system lead to positive outcomes for children and families.

**Overall Goal:**
Building upon the development of a QRIS, first initiated by the NJ BUILD Initiative, and the modifications and plan designed for a New Jersey QRIS in the recent Race to The Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application, the goal is to ultimately implement a statewide system for birth to five settings. This strategic plan, with the six related committee reports contained herein, is designed to promote high quality infant and early childhood services across all delivery systems, including health, mental health, child care, general education, special education and all private and public community service programs. This goal requires clear program standards, rigorous professional development and mentorship. The QRIS, Grow NJ, will enable measurement and progress in meeting this goal.

**Background:**
Grow NJ, was first designed by the NJ BUILD Initiative, under the leadership of Advocates for Children of New Jersey (ACNJ), which began work in 2005. This group, comprised of a broad gathering of public and private infant and early childhood system stakeholders, created a blueprint for infant and early childhood systems development. Among the goals articulated by the *BUILD Blueprint* (BUILD Initiative 2006) was to strengthen early education and care programs by building on the existing state preschool program standards to create a QRIS. Through the work of a NJ BUILD subcommittee, a QRIS was developed that incorporated the *New Jersey Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards* and *New Jersey Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines* from the Department of Education, Strengthening Families through Early Care and Education, National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation, NAEYC's Cultural Competence Checklist, Recognition and Response, and Head Start Performance Standards, laid out in a tiered system. Using private funding, the resulting five-step scale was piloted in six centers in the cities of Trenton and Camden and four centers in the city of Newark (see *Build the Future: Creating a Roadmap for Success: The Need for a Quality Rating and Improvement System in New Jersey*), and was focus-group tested with families by the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN).

**Current Status**:
Building on the results of the initial pilot, the Program Improvement Committee of the Council continued construction of the statewide QRIS by tapping into the Council's newly created formal relationships with state agencies and critical stakeholders to better integrate common standards of quality. The current product builds on the standards from each program to form a system that improves the quality of early learning and development systems across programs and increases the likelihood of positive gains for children with high needs from birth to five (*Grow NJ QRIS for Center-Based and School-Based Programs and Guidelines* and *Grow NJ QRIS for Family Child Care Programs and Guidelines).* Included in the system is *New Jersey's Birth to Three Learning Standards,* presented in Section 3 of this plan and developed by this Council's

Learning and Development Standards Committee. The professional development standards described by the Infancy and Early Childhood Mental Health committee (Section 6), will also be incorporated in the future. The Grow NJ tiered QRIS is based on the successful model of quality improvement carried out by the State Preschool Program, the QRIS pilot through the NJ BUILD Initiative, and existing cross-program standards (e.g., Head Start) and practices. Grow NJ provides an agreed upon and consistent means of addressing the elements of high quality program implementation, evaluation, improvement and communication to families and stakeholders about the quality of experiences in early learning and development programs serving children from birth to five. These experiences must be rooted in clear, evidence-based developmental and learning standards and a system that supports a competent, professional workforce, discussed in Sections 3, 4 and 6 of this strategic plan. The system is to be used by center-based providers, Family Child Care, Head Start, Early Head Start, and school district preschool programs for typically developing children and for children with disabilities. These centers/schools will serve children from birth to age five and their families. Below is a list of the sites that will be part of Grow NJ.

| |
|---|
| Former “Abbott” and “Expanders”* (District-operated programs, including self-contained) |
| Former “Abbott” and “Expanders”* (Provider-operated programs) |
| Non-contracting Private Provider programs in Former “Abbott” Districts |
| Combined Head Start/DOE/DHS Funded Programs |
| Early Childhood Program Aid (ECPA)/Early Launch to Learning Initiative (ELLI) District Programs |
| Classes for the Disabled |
| Non-Head Start Private Providers Serving Subsidized Children |
| Non-“Abbott” or non-contracting Head Start Providers |
| Family Child Care |
| Child Development Services Military Centers |

*”Expanders” refers to four districts approved in 2008 to operate state-funded preschool programs with funding and standards equal to the former “Abbott districts.

There are six main components to the Grow NJ system.

| **Grow NJ Main Components** |
|---|
| A set of concrete, observable quality standards that apply in all service delivery settings |
| A process for objectively assessing program quality and maintaining accountability |
| A system of training and technical assistance to help providers improve quality |
| Incentives to encourage providers to reach higher levels of quality |
| A system of ratings and validation |
| A public mechanism to tell families about Grow NJ and how it can be used when making early care and education decisions |

**The Tiered Steps and Categories in Brief**

Grow NJ standards outline key indicators of quality that are presented in six main categories:

- Program and Learning Environment
- Family Engagement
- Health and Safety
- Professional Development
- Personnel
- Business Practices

The standards are expressed in terms of five Steps, which correspond to a particular QRIS rating. The Steps are organized in a series of blocks that outline the indicators for quality within each category. Programs must demonstrate that they can meet *all* of the criteria in *all* of the categories in Step 1 to obtain a Step 1 rating, *all* in Step 1 *and* 2 before qualifying for a Step 2 rating, and so on in progression. The five Steps are distinguished by program features such as use of curriculum and assessment and scores on structured classroom observation instruments, features that are linked to positive developmental and educational outcomes for children. The instrument merges the best practices in each category to create a tool that is manageable yet challenging.

Grow NJ's categories are based on a set of state program standards that are embedded into one or more components, listed below.

**(1) Early Learning and Development Standards**: Grow NJ requires that programs implement the *New Jersey Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards* and the *New Jersey Birth to Three Early Learning Standards*. These standards provide a common framework for developmentally appropriate expectations for each age group of infants, toddlers and preschoolers. Strategies for children with disabilities and English learners are specifically addressed. Working with infants and children with indicators of early developmental and social-emotional difficulties is also addressed.

**(2) Comprehensive Assessment:** Grow NJ includes all four components of a comprehensive assessment system in its Steps. All four types of assessments are embedded, and sites choose which instruments they are using. Screenings are used to flag potential health, behavioral and developmental issues; formative assessments inform supports for each child's learning and development; and structured classroom-based measures of environment, interactions and activities drive changes. All Grow NJ participants will be offered guidance on the selection of each type of assessment instrument(s) appropriate for their site and program requirements (e.g., Head Start), as well as training on administration and use of the data.

**(3) Early Childhood Educator Qualifications**: Grow NJ includes a sequence of credentialing and professional development in order to better prepare the workforce to comprehensively address the needs of children, birth to five. For infant/child/family mental health and developmental issues, competent, well-trained professionals, as identified in Sections 4 and 6 of this plan, are essential.

**(4) Family Engagement Strategies:** Grow NJ accentuates family engagement throughout the entire system. As the Steps increase, more substantive engagement strategies are employed. Strategies to support children's development and learning encompass the protective factors from Strengthening Families through Early Care and Education and the Head Start Performance Standards.

**(5) Health promotion:** Building on the Head Start Performance Standards and the *New Jersey Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards*, Grow NJ promotes common requirements in health and safety; infant and early childhood mental health/behavioral and sensory screening referral and follow up; and the promotion of physical activity, healthy eating habits, oral health and behavioral health, and health literacy among families.

**(6) Effective data practices:** Indicators address data collection and data interpretation as well as decision-making in the areas of administration and financial management. Indicators also require that information is readily available to families and/or stakeholders.

**Next steps:**

The first five years of implementation of Grow NJ will be a slower roll-out, with a focus largely on supporting the sites that receive state funds for children though the Department of Human Services, the Administration for Children and Families (Head Start), or the Department of Education. A more intensive roll-out will begin in year six, at which point sites outside of those receiving state funds will be incorporated into the system. Sites in the former "Abbott" districts will be included after the initial pilot year, with all sites included by year seven.

One region of the state will be selected for roll-out each year, based on the resources available in the area; including, for example, Child Care Resource and Referral Agency (CCR&R) staff, access to higher education, infant/toddler specialists and supports from Family Success Centers. Training for technical assistance (TA) teams, curriculum and assessment supports and structured classroom observation instruments will be provided as sites are added, according to the roll-out plan. The seventh and eighth years will also begin the integration of the QRIS into the DCF Licensing system, with the Grow NJ Steps corresponding to levels of Licensing (e.g., Step 1 License, Step 2 License, and so on). Statewide implementation for all sites that serve children from birth to age five will be complete by 2024. However, the committee is currently exploring ways to shorten the timeline for rollout, both through the structure of the system components (e.g. using a self-report system) and through alternative funding sources. (See the Grow NJ roll-out and proposed budget categories toward the end of this section.)

Nine tasks related to the implementation of Grow NJ are included in this plan, summarized below:

1. Finalize QRIS scales and guidance documents and assure integration with Learning and Development Standards Committee plan. Integration of professional development standards regarding infant and early childhood mental health (Section 6) and the use of

"Reflective Practices" as a recommended practice will be incorporated into the final scales

2. Determine infrastructure and resources for Grow NJ – work within the current infrastructure including, for example, Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies, former Abbott preschool resources, Prevent Child Abuse services, Family Worker Supervisors, Workforce Registry, Family Success Centers, etc.
3. Determine program incentives for Grow NJ
4. Design and implement Grow NJ communications and marketing plan and integrate with Coordinated and Targeted Outreach/Communication Committee plan
5. Create and launch the Grow NJ data system
6. Set up regional TA system and integrate with Workforce Preparation Committee plan-
7. Set up rating system
8. Conduct validation study
9. Implement Grow NJ according to the schedule

1. Finalize QRIS scales and guidance documents and assure integration with Learning and Development Standards Committee plan

| **Step by Step Task** | **D= During Grant A= After Grant** | **Date Begin** | **Date Due** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1.1 Analyze survey feedback on scales and guidance | D | Feb 2012 | May 2012 (complete) |
| 1.2 Present revisions to Program Improvement Committee for recommended changes | D | April 2012 | May 2012 (complete) |
| 1.3 Implement field test for indicator validity | D/A | May 2012 | April 2013 |
| 1.4 Implement field test for each Grow NJ component | D/A | Aug 2012 | July 2014 |
| 1.5 Continue to vet scales and guidance with stakeholders through surveys and presentations | D/A | Ongoing | |
| 1.6 Translate scales and guidance into Spanish and other languages | D/A | Sep 2012 | Dec 2013 |
| 1.7 Professionally format scales | D | Sep 2012 | Dec 2012 |

2. Determine infrastructure and resources for Grow NJ

| Step by Step Task | D= During Grant A= After Grant | Date Begin | Date Due |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2.1 Review QRIS in other states for potential structural models for Grow NJ | D | Apr 2012 | May 2012 (complete) |
| 2.2 Propose infrastructure for Grow NJ, including leadership roles for each state agency | D | May 2012 | Sept 2012 |
| 2.3 Present proposal to Early Learning Commission | D | | Sept 2012 |
| 2.4 Develop MOA among state agencies | D | June 2012 | Sept 2012 |
| 2.5 Cost out infrastructure | D | June 2012 | Sept 2012 |

| 3. Determine program incentives for Grow NJ | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Step by Step Task** | **D= During Grant A= After Grant** | **Date Begin** | **Date Due** |
| 3.1 Make final decision about incentives | D/A | June 2012 | Sept 2013 |
| 3.2 Identify existing and new sources of funding for incentives | D/A | Sept 2012 | Sept 2013 |
| 3.3 Secure commitments of other state agencies and departments | D | June 2012 | Sept 2013 |
| 3.4 Provide incentives to support participation of programs in initial roll-out | D/A | Sept 2012 | Annually |

| 4. Design and implement Grow NJ communications and marketing plan and integrate with Coordinated and Targeted Outreach/Communication Committee plan | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Step by Step Task** | **D= During Grant A= After Grant** | **Date Begin** | **Date Due** |
| 4.1 Incorporate Grow NJ into the overall communications and marketing plan for guidance documents developed through the Council | D | June 2012 | Sept 2012 |
| 4.2 Create orientation to Grow NJ | D/A | Aug 2012 | Oct 2012 |
| 4.3 Create informational website | D | Sept 2012 | Dec 2012 |
| 4.4 Develop brochures on QRIS to educate and engage parents and participants | A | Sept 2013 | Dec 2013 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4.5 Establish ongoing marketing and web maintenance | | ongoing | Updated quarterly |

| 5. Create and launch the Grow NJ data system | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Step by Step Task** | **D= During Grant A= After Grant** | **Date Begin** | **Date Due** |
| 5.1 Hire contractor to develop electronic entry and tracking system or modify existing electronic system (Department of Human Services is exploring modifications to the Workforce Registry) | D | July 2012 | Aug 2013 |
| 5.2 Train TA teams and sites on the online system and how to address criteria in each component | D/A | July 2013 | Ongoing |
| 5.3 Launch Grow NJ data system for program and staff use | A | Sept 2013 | Ongoing |
| 5.4 Launch family portal | A | Jan 2014 | Ongoing |
| 5.5 Set up a public relations campaign with CCR&Rs for family portal | A | Jan 2014 | Ongoing |

| 6. Set up regional TA system and integrate with Workforce Preparation Committee plan | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Step by Step Task** | **D= During Grant A= After Grant** | **Date Begin** | **Date Due** |
| 6.1 Designate and train TA Teams made up of Learning Coaches, Health Coordinators, Infant and Child Mental Health Specialists, Birth to Five Disabilities Coordinators and Family Engagement Specialists, beginning with one or two counties | D/A | Sept 2012 | ongoing |
| 6.2 Create and determine content of detailed training modules based on TA plan | D | Sept 2012 | July 2013 |
| 6.3 Begin training-of-trainer (TOT) series to train each team on the common standards through modules, tools and resources for their focus area | D/A | Sept 2012 | according to roll-out |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 6.4 Integrate the birth to three and revised preschool learning standards with the relevant components of the comprehensive assessment system, curricula and professional development system | D/A | Dec 2012 | July 2013, according to roll-out |
| 6.5 Secure curricula contracts, schedule and offer regional training on curricula and formative assessments according to the roll-out schedule | D/A | Sept 2013 | according to roll-out |
| 6.6 Offer regional training on screenings and structured classroom observation instruments | D/A | Sept 2013 | according to roll-out |

| 7. Set up rating system | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Step by Step Task** | **D= During Grant A= After Grant** | **Date Begin** | **Date Due** |
| 7.1 Develop Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with universities to create an Early Learning Improvement Consortium (ELIC) according to roll-out schedule | D/A | Sept 2012 | ongoing |
| 7.2 Finalize rating procedures | A | Dec 2012 | Sept 2013 |
| 7.3 Begin to assign ratings | A | Feb 2013 | per roll-out |

| 8. Conduct validation study | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Step by Step Task** | **D= During Grant A= After Grant** | **Date Begin** | **Date Due** |
| 8.1 Complete Request For Proposal (RFP) process and identify evaluator according to roll-out schedule | A | Sept 2013 | ongoing |
| 8.2 Collect data and conduct analyses to establish reliability of New Jersey's ELIC quality assessments administrations | A | Sept 2013 | 9/1/2013 per roll-out |
| 8.3 Crosswalk validation study with kindergarten entry results in NJ SMART (the state's longitudinal data system) | | Sept 2014 | |

| 9. Implement Grow NJ according to the schedule | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Step by Step Task** | **D= During Grant A= After Grant** | **Date Begin** | **Date Due** |
| 9.1 Begin implementation of Grow NJ in sites receiving state funds | A | Sept 2013 | July 2019 |
| 9.2 Begin implementation in sites not receiving state funds | A | Sept 2019 | July 2021 |
| 9.3 Begin building into licensing system | A | Sept 2019 | |
| 9.4 Move to full implementation throughout the state | A | | Per schedule |

**Explanation of Grow NJ Roll-Out**

The proposed roll-out for Grow NJ is a long, but ambitious process intended to eventually include all of New Jersey's Head Start programs, licensed child care providers, school district preschool programs, Military Child Development Centers and registered or approved family child care programs. The roll-out starts with a small pilot of sixty sites, all of which will be early care and development programs serving families with subsidies for child care. After the first year, 100 sites will be included in each of the next four years. Starting in year six, the roll-out will become more intense, with about 944 additional sites being added each year. The former "Abbott" preschool programs will phase in over six years, starting in year two. By year nine of the roll-out, all programs serving families with subsidies for child care will be included in Grow NJ.

Several assumptions were made in the development of the roll-out. First, it is anticipated that approximately 30 percent of programs will rate a three, four or five on Grow NJ at any given stage, with the exception of former "Abbott" programs, for which 90 percent of each initial group of programs are assumed to rate at least a three upon first entry. Also, it is assumed that any program rating a one or a two will return for another rating after two years, while any program rating a three or higher will not return for another rating until four years have passed.

To better understand the roll-out, it may be helpful to follow one cohort through the first several years of the process. Cohort 1, for example, includes 60 sites. Of these 60 sites, it is assumed that in Year 1, 30 percent (18 sites) will rate a 3, 4, or 5 and that 70 percent (42 sites) will rate a 1 or 2.

| | **Year 1** |
|---|---|
| ***Rating model*** | **2012 (Pilot)** |

| **Cohort 1 - # total sites** | **60** |
|---|---|
| *Rate a 3, 4, or 5* | 18 |
| *Rate a 1 or 2* | 42 |

After receiving training, professional development and incentives, those 42 sites rating a 1 or 2 in Year 1, will return two years later (Year 3) for another rating. Again, it is assumed that in Year 3, 30 percent (13 sites) will rate a 3, 4, or 5 and 70 percent (29 sites) will rate a 1 or 2.

| | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Year 3** |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Rating model*** | **2012 (Pilot)** | **2013** | **2014** |
| **Cohort 1 - # total sites** | **60** | **-** | **42** |
| *Rate a 3, 4, or 5* | 18 | | 13 |
| *Rate a 1 or 2* | 42 | | 29 |

Two years later (Year 5), those 29 sites rating a 1 or 2 in Year 3 will return again for another rating. Of those 29 sites, 9 will rate a 3, 4, or 5 and 20 will rate a 1 or 2. At the same time, four years will have passed for the 18 sites rating a 3, 4, or 5 in Year 1, so those 18 sites will also receive another rating. We assume that the 18 sites rating a 3, 4, or 5 in Year 1 will continue to rate a 3, 4, or 5 in Year 5. As a result, in Year 5 there are 27 sites (18 + 9) rating a 3, 4, or 5 and 20 sites rating a 1 or 2.

| | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Year 3** | **Year 4** | **Year 5** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***Rating model*** | **2012 (Pilot)** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** |
| **Cohort 1 - # sites** | **60** | **-** | **42** | **-** | **47** |
| *Rate a 3, 4, or 5* | 18 | | 13 | | 27 |
| *Rate a 1 or 2* | 42 | | 29 | | 20 |

Cohort 1 continues in this manner, including more and more sites in the 3, 4, or 5 range on each rating cycle. As represented in the roll-out below, a new cohort begins each year, moving through the system in the same manner as Cohort 1.

| Grow NJ Proposed Rollout | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 | Year 6 | Year 7 | Year 8 | Year 9 | Year 10 | Year 11 | Year 12 | Year 13 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***Cohorts*** | **2012 Pilot** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** |
| **Cohort 1** | **60** | **-** | **42** | **-** | **47** | **-** | **33** | **-** | **41** | **-** | **29** | **-** | **38** |
| *Rate 3, 4, or 5* | 18 | | 13 | | 27 | | 19 | | 31 | | 22 | | 33 |
| *Rate 1 or 2* | 42 | | 29 | | 20 | | 14 | | 10 | | 7 | | 5 |
| **Cohort 2** | - | **100** | **-** | **40** | **-** | **88** | **-** | **32** | **-** | **82** | **-** | **28** | **-** |
| *Rate 3, 4, or 5* | - | 60 | | 12 | | 68 | | 18 | | 72 | | 21 | |
| *Rate 1 or 2* | - | 40 | | 28 | | 20 | | 14 | | 10 | | 7 | |
| **Cohort 3** | - | - | **100** | **-** | **40** | **-** | **88** | **-** | **32** | **-** | **82** | **-** | **28** |
| *Rate 3, 4, or 5* | - | - | 60 | | 12 | | 68 | | 18 | | 72 | | 21 |
| *Rate 1 or 2* | - | - | 40 | | 28 | | 20 | | 14 | | 10 | | 7 |
| **Cohort 4** | - | - | - | **100** | **-** | **40** | **-** | **88** | **-** | **32** | **-** | **82** | **-** |
| *Rate 3, 4, or 5* | - | - | - | 60 | | 12 | | 68 | | 18 | | 72 | |
| *Rate 1 or 2* | - | - | - | 40 | | 28 | | 20 | | 14 | | 10 | |
| **Cohort 5** | - | - | - | - | **100** | **-** | **40** | **-** | **88** | **-** | **32** | **-** | **82** |
| *Rate 3, 4, or 5* | - | - | - | - | 60 | | 12 | | 68 | | 18 | | 72 |
| *Rate 1 or 2* | - | - | - | - | 40 | | 28 | | 20 | | 14 | | 10 |
| **Cohort 6** | - | - | - | - | - | **944** | **-** | **536** | **-** | **784** | **-** | **424** | **-** |
| *Rate 3, 4, or 5* | - | - | - | - | - | 408 | | 161 | | 521 | | 240 | |
| *Rate 1 or 2* | - | - | - | - | - | 536 | | 375 | | 263 | | 184 | |
| **Cohort 7** | - | - | - | - | - | - | **944** | **-** | **536** | **-** | **784** | **-** | **424** |
| *Rate 3, 4, or 5* | - | - | - | - | - | - | 408 | | 161 | | 521 | | 240 |
| *Rate 1 or 2* | - | - | - | - | - | - | 536 | | 375 | | 263 | | 184 |
| **Cohort 8** | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **944** | **-** | **661** | **-** | **746** | **-** |
| *Rate 3, 4, or 5* | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 283 | | 198 | | 422 | |
| *Rate 1 or 2* | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 661 | | 463 | | 324 | |
| **Cohort 9** | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **944** | **-** | **661** | **-** | **746** |
| *Rate 3, 4, or 5* | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 283 | | 198 | | 422 |
| *Rate 1 or 2* | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 661 | | 463 | | 324 |
| **Cohort 10** | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **944** | **-** | **661** | **-** |
| *Rate 3, 4, or 5* | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 283 | | 198 | |
| *Rate 1 or 2* | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 661 | | 463 | |
| **Cohort 11** | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **944** | **-** | **661** |
| *Rate 3, 4, or 5* | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 283 | | 198 |
| *Rate 1 or 2* | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 661 | | 463 |
| **Cohort 12** | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **944** | **-** |
| *Rate 3, 4, or 5* | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 283 | |
| *Rate 1 or 2* | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 661 | |
| **Cohort 13** | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | **944** |
| *Rate 3, 4, or 5* | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 283 |
| *Rate 1 or 2* | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 661 |
| **Total sites rated** | **60** | **100** | **142** | **140** | **187** | **1,072** | **1,105** | **1,600** | **1,641** | **2,503** | **2,532** | **2,885** | **2,923** |

**8,012 sites at year 2024**

**Explanation of Anticipated Grow NJ Budget Categories**

The proposed budget for Grow NJ is a reflection of the proposed roll-out and all resources needed to successfully implement a QRIS in New Jersey. Below is a description of each anticipated line-item and how costs for each item may be estimated. As with the roll-out, many assumptions were made in the development of the anticipated costs. Assumptions were most often based on the state's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge proposal.

Curriculum Training – Each site will receive at least two years of direct curriculum training. Any programs rating a one or a two will receive an additional year of training. Costs for training are estimated at approximately $15,000 per year for each cohort of 50 staff. Former "Abbott" sites will not be included in this training.

Technology for Electronic Systems – Programs participating in Grow NJ may need technology (computers, internet connection, etc.) in order to enter Grow NJ information into the electronic system. The budget includes $1,250 per site so that programs not already equipped with proper technology may be outfitted with the necessary equipment. As separate funding is already provided to the former "Abbott" programs for these items, they are not included in the calculation of these costs. (Note: These costs are likely overstated because many programs may already have the necessary technology.)

Performance Assessments and Training – Training in a performance assessment will be provided to all teachers, directors and teacher assistants. $7,500 is budgeted for each cohort of approximately 50 staff.

Ratings and Inter-rater Reliability – The cost of an MOU with a state university to conduct Grow NJ ratings in each participating program is estimated at approximately $900 per site (including both classroom ratings and the overall site rating). The estimated costs are based on an NJDOE MOU to conduct similar ratings in the former "Abbott" districts. (Note: Additional research is being done to ensure that the per site cost is not understated.)

Setup of Electronic Grow NJ – A preliminary quote from one company that develops QRIS data systems indicates that approximately $605,000 will be needed for the initial development of a Grow NJ data system. However, the Department of Human Services is exploring to the possibility of building the electronic system into the New Jersey's existing Workforce Registry.

Maintaining Datasets – A preliminary quote from the above company estimates that approximately $154,500 will be needed on an annual basis to maintain the Grow NJ database.

Electronic Assessments – A preliminary quote from the above company indicates that each Grow NJ assessment will cost about $35 per child.

QRIS Validity Study – Based on costs from a validity study conducted on the former "Abbott" preschool program, it is estimated that we will need about $530,000 per year to assess the validity of Grow NJ. Studies are proposed for each of the first three years of implementation, and then on a three-year cycle after that point.

Agency Staff to Implement Grow NJ – The budget includes four staff members from each of the participating state agencies (DHS, DOH, DOE, and DCF) to oversee the implementation of Grow NJ. Approximately $111,780 is budgeted annually for each staff member and includes salary, benefits, travel, and equipment/materials and supplies. Estimates are based on annual state costs for professional staff.

Incentives – The proposed plan builds in recommended incentives; however, the exact nature of the incentives will depend on available resources. Proposed incentives are as follows:

1. **Per child subsidy** – A per child subsidy is included for each subsidized child in a center rating at least a two. Sites rating a two will receive a subsidy in the amount of $100 for each subsidized child. Those rating a three will receive $200 per subsidized child, sites rating a four will receive $300 per subsidized child and those rating a five will receive $400 per subsidized child. The former "Abbott" programs are not eligible for this incentive.
2. **Menu of Options** – A $2,000 incentive is included for each site participating in Grow NJ. Sites can apply for the $2,000 stipend two times, and use the funding for program improvements of any kind (facility upgrades, materials and supplies, etc.). The incentive amount is based on amounts proposed in the state's Race to the Top application. The former "Abbott" programs are not eligible for this incentive.
3. **Higher Education for Teacher and Directors** – A one-time stipend of $3,000 will be available for each teacher and director to pursue higher education and/or professional development in early learning and development. The incentive amount is based on amounts proposed in the state's Race to the Top application. The former "Abbott" programs are not eligible for this incentive.
4. **Higher Education for Teacher Assistants** – A one-time stipend of $1,000 will be available for each teacher assistant to pursue further education and/or professional development in early learning and development. The incentive amount is based on amounts proposed in the state's Race to the Top application. The former "Abbott" programs are not eligible for this incentive.

| Category | Unit | Unit Cost | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|
| Curriculum training | Per cohort | $15,000 | Cohort = 50 people<br>$15,000 for 1 cohort |
| Technology for electronic systems | Costs per setup | $1,250 | 1 setup per site |
| Performance assessments and training | Per cohort | $7,500 | Cohort = 50 people<br>$7,500 for 1 cohort<br>site covers child assessment |
| Ratings and inter-rater reliability | Cost per site | $900 | Includes classroom ratings and overall site rating |
| Setup of Electronic Grow NJ | One-time fee | Up to $605,000 | Cost will depend on vendor |
| Maintaining data sets, Grow NJ | Annual fee | $154,500 | Cost will depend on vendor |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Grow NJ Assessments | Costs per child | $35 | Annual fee |
| Grow NJ validity study on regular schedule | Cost per study | $530,000 | Annual for about 3 years, then every 3 years after that |
| Incentives – Subsidy | Costs per child | $100-$400 | By child receiving subsidy, depending on Grow NJ rating level |
| Incentives – Environmental Improvements | Costs per center | $2,000 | Available twice for each center |
| Incentives – Higher Education | Costs per person | $3,000 | Available once for each teacher and director |
| Incentives – Higher Education | Costs per person | $1,000 | Available once for each teacher assistant |
| Agency staff to implement Grow NJ | Costs per person | $111,780 | Annually for salary, benefits, travel and equipment for 4 staff |

## Assumptions for Grow NJ

| | |
|---|---|
| Estimated classrooms per site | 3 |
| Estimated staff needing training per site | 7 |
| Estimated # of children per classroom | 12 |
| Total sites participating | 8,012 |
| Total children on subsidy (non-Abbott) | 55,000 |
| Total children in Abbott districts | 46,700 |
| Total children included at full roll-out | 312,956 |

## Children, Sites and Classrooms Participating in Grow NJ, by year

| Children and Sites by Year | SY 1 | SY 2 | SY 3 | SY 4 | SY 5 | SY 6 | SY 7 | SY 8 | SY 9 | SY 10 | SY 11 | SY 12 | SY 13 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| New Sites each Year | 60 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 944 | 944 | 944 | 944 | 944 | 944 | 944 | 944 |
| New Sites each Year, less Abbotts | 60 | 50 | 50 | 50 | 50 | 739 | 739 | 944 | 944 | 944 | 944 | 944 | 944 |
| Sites Needing Training (2 yrs for all new, and sites rating 1 or 2) | 60 | 110 | 129 | 128 | 128 | 814 | 1,500 | 2,236 | 2,263 | 2,351 | 2,351 | 2,351 | 2,351 |
| Classrooms Getting Training (non-Abbott) | 180 | 330 | 387 | 384 | 384 | 2,442 | 4,500 | 6,789 | 6,789 | 7,053 | 7,053 | 7,053 | 7,053 |
| Staff Needing Training (non-Abbott) | 420 | 770 | 903 | 896 | 896 | 5,698 | 10,500 | 15,841 | 15,841 | 16,457 | 16,457 | 16,457 | 16,457 |
| New Children Each Year | 2,160 | 5,590 | 5,590 | 5,590 | 5,590 | 42,374 | 42,374 | 33,984 | 33,984 | 33,984 | 33,984 | 33,984 | 33,984 |
| Children in sites getting training | 2,160 | 3,960 | 4,644 | 4,608 | 4,608 | 29,304 | 54,000 | 81,468 | 81,468 | 84,636 | 84,636 | 84,636 | 84,636 |
| Children in Abbott Districts | 0 | 3,970 | 3,970 | 3,970 | 3,970 | 15,770 | 15,770 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Children on Subsidy (non-Abbott) | 1,512 | 2,376 | 5,730 | 9,084 | 12,438 | 25,562 | 37,399 | 47,989 | 55,000 | 55,000 | 55,000 | 55,000 | 55,000 |
| Children on subsidy in high level centers | 605 | 1,188 | 3,438 | 6,359 | 9,950 | 20,450 | 33,659 | 43,190 | 49,500 | 49,500 | 49,500 | 49,500 | 49,500 |
| Total Children Participating | 2,160 | 7,750 | 13,340 | 18,930 | 24,520 | 66,894 | 109,268 | 143,252 | 177,236 | 211,220 | 245,204 | 279,188 | 313,172 |

## Section 2: Coordinated Data Systems

The work of the Coordinated Data Systems Committee overlaps with each of the Council's other committees in a variety of ways. Once the state's early childhood data systems are connected and linked to Grow NJ rating information, conclusions may be drawn about the impact of early childhood programs on young children. Coordinating the state's data collections will allow the Council's Program Improvement Committee, Learning and Development Standards Committee, and Infancy and Early Childhood Mental Health Committee to assess the relationship between programs with high QRIS ratings and children who go on to perform well in school. In this way, these committees will be able to determine whether the program and learning standards currently in place and the professional development provided to programs are having a positive impact on children.

Similarly, the Workforce Preparation Committee will be able to use data to measure the impact of a well-prepared early childhood workforce on the success of early learning and development programs. The Committee can then use this information in discussions with institutions of higher education to refine teacher preparation programs to better develop the state's early childhood workforce. Finally, the Coordinated and Targeted Outreach/Communication Committee will be able to use the state's coordinated data systems to increase families' awareness of the importance of choosing high quality early childhood education experiences for young children. The major goal of the New Jersey Council for Young Children will be realized as more families demand high quality early learning programs, and early learning programs strive to increase quality to meet that demand.

In the Council's 2010 Strategic Plan, three priorities were identified as essential steps to unify New Jersey's data systems across state agencies:

1. Mapping who has what data and how it can now be accessed and used for systemic analyses, strategic planning, service improvement and public accountability. Real and perceived barriers to data sharing and release posed by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) need to be addressed, with national technical assistance if it is available
2. Securing the assignment of a unique child identifier at birth
3. Exploring, as an interim measure, how to design a proper, timely and regular process of matching data sets on vulnerable children and families (and the services that support them) across state agencies and extant data systems

**Overall Goal:**
It is critical for New Jersey to undertake this work to coordinate early learning data systems. There are significant questions about our existing programs and services that will remain unanswered until data is shared across programs and agencies. Following longitudinal data for groups of children will allow state agencies to assess the efficacy of existing programs, identify

underserved populations, and target struggling programs for additional support and professional development. Integrating data from each of the state's early learning and development programs will meet the ultimate goal to be able, for the first time, to view as a whole the state's approach to reaching our youngest children. More importantly, questions about the impact of the state's early childhood programs on children will be answered.

**Background:**
Over the past two years, the Council has made significant progress in addressing two of the above priorities, further preparing the state to link early learning data systems once the necessary resources are available. Through an MOU with the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER), the Council's Data Committee was recently presented with a draft report mapping the state's existing data systems and the information collected in each system. In addition to the mapping exercise, NIEER provided the following recommendations to the Council:

- Stakeholders – Ensure that all critical parties are involved in data discussions, including parents, the legislature, and the research community
- Key questions – Focus on a small number of critical questions most helpful for the integrated data system to answer, not an exhaustive list of questions that will take valuable resources away from critical areas
- Content – Connect unique identifiers for children, programs and early childhood educators. Ensure that data definitions are consistent among data systems
- Data integration/warehouse model – Engage state experts in discussions about the best way to integrate data from several state data systems
- System management and technology – Determine what is necessary for proper development, maintenance and continued improvement of an integrated data system
- Governance – Establish a Data Governance Advisory Board to develop policies on the use of data and address all *The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act* (HIPAA) and *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA) requirements/issues

**Current Status:**
In response to the report's recommendations, the Data Committee is taking several steps. First, the Committee is in the process of revising the thirteen key questions proposed in the NIEER report:

1. What are the demographics of New Jersey's children from birth through five years?
2. In which communities are children more vulnerable to being at-risk of school and future success?
3. Are New Jersey's children, birth through age five, on track to succeed when they enter kindergarten and beyond?
4. What is the availability of high quality early education and care programs throughout New Jersey?

5. Which children are participating in high quality early education and care programs?
6. Which children have access to and are receiving necessary support services to ensure school readiness?
7. Which of New Jersey's early education and care programs possess characteristics of effective, high quality early education and care programs?
8. Is the quality of New Jersey's early education and care programs improving?
9. How much does it cost to serve New Jersey's young children in high quality programs?
10. What are the characteristics of New Jersey's early education and care workforce?
11. Is the quality of New Jersey's early education and care workforce improving?
12. What policies and investments lead to a skilled, stable and effective early education and care workforce?
13. What administrative safeguards exist to ensure effective and appropriate multi-agency use of data in a manner that ensures child, family, program and professional privacy?

Second, the Data Committee is engaging in essential discussions that are necessary before we can link data systems across state agencies. Appropriate contacts from each state agency are gathering to discuss which data elements are necessary to answer the state's key questions, which of those data elements are collected by more than one data system, and which data system should serve as the primary source for each data element. This group will also determine whether any data elements needed to answer key questions are missing from state data systems and, in that case, which data system may be able to capture those missing data elements in the future. Much of this specific work can be done without additional resources, and so the Data Committee continues to undertake important background work to prepare for when additional funding and resources are identified.

**Next Steps:**
The Council proposes using open source software to develop a prototype for a collaborative data system. Much like a prototype recently developed to integrate Vermont's early childhood data systems, this method provides an expedient way to pull data together to generate reports that answer important questions about the state's early learning programs and services. Open source software can be used to create an interface that is not only user-friendly, but also helps to prevent privacy issues and is cost-effective. Note that the timeline provided below may be adjusted based on actual resources.

Appropriate program and data representatives overseeing each of the state's early learning data systems will need to work with a consultant to develop the system and ensure that all data is used appropriately. Once the initial prototype is developed, a more permanent data manager will be needed to oversee the data system, adding greater capacity and functionality over time.

There are four main tasks associated with accomplishing these next steps:

1. Review initial mapping of state data systems and propose critical questions to the Council
2. Determine the capacity of existing data systems to answer key questions
3. Contract with an outside entity (consultant and/or university) to develop prototype for data system
4. Hire a permanent staff person to oversee final development of data system

| 1. Review initial mapping of state data systems and propose critical questions to the Council | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Step by Step Tasks** | **D= During Grant**<br><br>**A= After Grant** | **Begin Date** | **Due Date** |
| 1.1 Data Committee members analyze draft of New Jersey Data Systems Report | D | December 2011 | February 2012 (complete) |
| 1.2 Data Committee members submit suggested changes to report to correct any inaccuracies | D | February 2012 | March 2012 (complete) |
| 1.3 Data Committee members submit suggested changes to suggested key questions identified in Report | D | February 2012 | March 2012 (complete) |
| 1.4 Present set of 13 key questions to the full Council for consideration | D | October 2012 | October 2012 |

| 2. Determine the capacity of existing data systems to answer key questions | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Step by Step Tasks** | **D= During Grant**<br><br>**A= After Grant** | **Begin Date** | **Due Date** |
| 2.1 Identify data elements needed to answer each critical question | D | July 2012 | November 2012 |
| 2.2 Identify which data system(s) collect each necessary data element | D | July 2012 | November 2012 |
| 2.3 When multiple data systems collect the same necessary data element, determine which data | D | Oct 2012 | Dec 2012 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| system should be the authoritative source for that element | | | |
| 2.4 Identify any necessary data elements that are not yet collected and a data system that can collect them | D | Oct 2012 | Dec 2012 |

3. Contract with an outside entity to develop prototype for data system

| **Step by Step Tasks** | **D= During Grant**<br>**A= After Grant** | **Begin Date** | **Due Date** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3.1 Develop a draft RFP to solicit bids for an outside contractor and/or university to develop an initial prototype to link early learning data systems | D | Jan 2013 | Feb 2013 |
| 3.2 Get feedback from other states and in-house data experts to ensure that the RFP meets all of the objectives we hope to accomplish | D | Feb 2013 | March 2013 |
| 3.3 Release RFP, evaluate proposals, and select outside contractor/university | D | March 2013 | July 2013 |
| 3.4 Work with contractor/university to determine how best to present information to the public via the online interface | D/A | July 2013 | Oct 2013 |
| 3.5 Develop a plan for how the online interface will look and how a users experience should flow | D/A | July 2013 | Oct 2013 |
| 3.6 Select one critical question to use as the basis for an initial trial of the data system prototype | A | Oct 2013 | Oct 2013 |
| 3.7 Produce a functioning prototype, using real data, providing users with answers to select key questions | A | Oct 2013 | Dec 2013 |
| 3.8 Present data system prototype to Council for comment and feedback | A | Jan 2014 | Jan 2014 |

4. Hire permanent staff person to oversee final development of data system

| **Step by Step Tasks** | **D= During Grant** | **Begin Date** | **Due Date** |
|---|---|---|---|

| | **A= After Grant** | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4.1 Transition from consultant/university to permanent staff person | A | Jan 2014 | Jan 2014 |
| 4.2 Develop a plan to include the necessary data elements from each of the state's early learning databases in order to answer each of the key questions | A | Feb 2014 | April 2014 |
| 4.3 Develop a plan to systematically include more data elements in the data system to answer each of key questions, adding data elements to answer one additional question at a time, until the system has the capacity to answer all of the key questions | A | Feb 2014 | April 2014 |
| 4.4 Develop a plan for the upkeep of data elements in the data system with respect to when data elements are updated, etc. | A | Feb 2014 | April 2014 |
| 4.5 Hold a data summit to introduce the data system to, researchers, practitioners, family leaders, family associations, and legislators, gathering feedback for any necessary changes | A | July 2014 | July 2014 |
| 4.6 Establish a data governance council to make policy recommendations regarding future changes to and/or growth of the data system | A | July 2014 | ongoing |

| **Associated Costs by Task** | **2011-12** | **2012-13** | **2013-14** | **2014-15** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Review initial mapping of state data systems and propose critical questions to the Council | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 |
| 2. Determine the capacity of existing data systems to answer key questions | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 |
| 3. Contract with an outside entity to develop prototype for data system | $0 | $0 | $100,000 | $111,780 |
| **Total Resources by Year** | **$0** | **$0** | **$100,000** | **$111,780** |

**Section 3: Learning and Development Standards**

The Learning and Development Standards Committee of the Council has been leading the development of *New Jersey's Birth to Three Early Learning Standards*, and plans to support the development of an aligned set of *Birth to Eight Early Learning Standards.* High quality and aligned standards for young children are critical for the following reasons:

1. Using common learning and development standards will help ensure developmentally appropriate expectations and learning experiences for all children, regardless of the type of provider or school
2. Using a common set of learning and development standards will encourage settings to choose curricula and assessments that are responsive to the diverse needs of all young children

*New Jersey's Birth to Three Early Learning Standards* are intended to reflect widely accepted expectations of learning for children from birth to three. Systematic guidance or recommendations will assist all providers in being responsive to the individual needs of young children. To this end, the Standards further address the need to inform adults who work with infants and toddlers about how and what children are learning, how the Standards reflect the natural progression of learning in the first three years of life and realistic expectations for young children to develop academic readiness at various rates, levels and across domains. Lastly, the Standards reflect the importance of adult-child interactions and expectations and values that support the development of a child's cultural identity and special needs.

The work of the Learning and Development Standards Committee will be to integrate the new birth to three standards in the other activities of the Council. The Standards will be integrated into the Grow NJ instruments and technical assistance modules to ensure that early childhood professionals in all early learning settings have an understanding of the developmental trajectory for infants and young children from birth to three.

*New Jersey's Birth to Three Early Learning Standards* will be included in the state's recently adopted Infant/Toddler credential, ensuring integration and coordination across higher education and professional preparation programs.

The Learning and Development Standards Committee will collaborate with the Outreach/Communication Committee to support a public education campaign that conveys the importance of high quality programs, particularly for underserved populations, by informing families that comprehensive early learning and program standards contribute to positive outcomes for children. Family-friendly versions of the standards will be translated into Spanish,

and disseminated in a variety of ways, including the parent-led County Councils, website and print.

Finally, as the Data Committee undertakes the coordination of early learning data systems and connects with the embedded standards and best practice of Grow NJ program improvement efforts, the State will be better able to assess if New Jersey's children, birth through age eight, are on track to succeed when they enter kindergarten and beyond.

**Overall Goals:**
The Committee's charge was two-fold:

1. Design *New Jersey's Birth to Three Early Learning Standards* and a standards implementation plan
2. Align the early learning and development standards across the early childhood age range, from birth to eight

**Background:**
As its first task, the Committee began the process of developing *Birth to Three Early Learning Standards* by conducting extensive research of early learning standards in other states. A number of states' infant and toddler early learning standards were reviewed and evaluated using a rubric designed to assess how well each met essential research-based criteria identified by the Committee. As a result of this process, the Committee, with the approval of the Council, requested permission to adapt the *Early Childhood Indicators of Progress: Minnesota's Early Learning Guidelines for Birth to Three* as *New Jersey's Birth to Three Early Learning Standards*.

The Committee entered into a partnership with the national Zero-to-Three organization for its technical assistance and support. The Committee also identified a consultant to facilitate the revision of the *Early Childhood Indicators of Progress: Minnesota's Early Learning Guidelines for Birth to Three*. Dr. Gail Roberts, who served as a consultant and author for Minnesota Early Learning Guidelines, was engaged as a consultant to work with the Learning and Development Standards Committee. The Minnesota Department of Human Services graciously granted New Jersey permission to use, adopt, and adapt their work.

**Current Status:**
In April 2012, the Committee hired a consultant to serve as a project coordinator to oversee the field review of the *New Jersey Birth to Three Early Learning Standards*. The purpose of the field review is to solicit feedback from stakeholders including teaching staff, caregivers, administrators and parents who work with children ages birth to three. In addition, the project coordinator will also consult with national experts in the field to determine that the early learning standards are reflective of the latest research and are aligned with best practices across other states' early learning standards. To date, several presentations and focus groups have taken place with statewide early childhood organizations and associations such as the Coalition of Infant/Toddler Educators (CITE), the NJ Child Care Association, the Inter

Department Planning Group, Head Start and the NJ First Steps Infant/Toddler Initiative. Feedback will be collected and summarized into a list of recommendations for the Council.

**Next Steps:**
Once finalized, the *New Jersey Birth to Three Early Learning Standards* are expected to be adopted by the state agencies and will be administered across all settings serving children birth to three. Next steps include designing an implementation and training support plan to address the wide range of audiences, including parents, caregivers/teachers, higher education/ professional development providers and policymakers. The early learning standards will also be part of Grow NJ as programs seek to advance high quality outcomes for children.

Along the same lines of advancing high quality outcomes for children, the current preschool standards will be revised to better align with the *New Jersey Common Core Standards* for grades kindergarten to three to ensure appropriate teacher expectations for what children should know and be able to do. This initiative is based upon a prior mapping effort of both sets of standards that revealed gaps in certain areas. Also, the category of "Approaches to Learning" will be added to the preschool standards. This area is currently integrated throughout the standards document but requires special attention as it is emerging as an area predictive of children's academic success.

There are two tasks related to the implementation of the early learning standards, summarized below:

1. By June 2013, complete all phases of the *New Jersey Birth to Three Early Learning and Program Standards* design and implementation process
2. By April 2013, revise the existing preschool standards to align with the *New Jersey Common Core Standards* for English Language Arts and Mathematics for Grades K-3 to ensure appropriate teacher expectations for what children should know and be able to do

| 1. By June, 2013, complete all phases of the *New Jersey Birth to Three Early Learning and Program Standards* design and implementation process | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Step by Step Task** | **D=During Grant A=After Grant** | **Date Begin** | **Date Due** |
| 1.1 Hire a facilitator to lead the Field Review process to the completion of *New Jersey Birth to Three Early Learning Standards* | D | April 2012 | August 2012 |
| 1.2 To enlist the work of early childhood experts to review and critique *New Jersey Birth to Three Early Learning Standards* | D | July 2012 | September 2012 |
| 1.3 To complete *New Jersey Birth to Three Early Learning* | D | August | September |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Standards* design for adoption | | 2012 | 2012 |
| 1.4 To complete a Training and Dissemination Action Plan in collaboration with Outreach/Communication and Program Improvement Committees | D | August 2012 | October 2012 |
| 1.5 To prepare training materials to support the dissemination of *New Jersey Birth to Three Early Learning Standards* | D | July 2012 | October 2012 |
| 1.6 To coordinate with Program Improvement Committee the integration and implementation of NJ Program Standards | D | October 2012 | April 2013 |
| 1.7 To establish an alignment between *New Jersey Birth to Three Early Learning Standards* and *New Jersey's Preschool Standards* | A | September 2012 | December 2012 |
| 1.8 To engage New Jersey Department of Education's graphic artist in creation of Birth – Preschool aligned document | D | October 2012 | January 2013 |
| 1.9 To support the design, implementation, evaluation of the Kindergarten Entry Assessment System of the New Jersey Department of Education | D/A | August 2012 | June 2013 |
| 1.10 To introduce the *New Jersey Birth to Three Early Learning Standards* at state conferences. | D | September 2012 | August 2013 |
| 1.11 To disseminate *New Jersey Birth to Three Early Learning Standards* in accordance with dissemination plan and overall New Jersey Council for Young Children's media plan | D | November 2012 | December 2012 |

2. By April 2013, revise the existing preschool standards to align with the *New Jersey Common Core* standards for English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics for Grades K-3 to ensure appropriate teacher expectations for what children should know and be able to do

| **Step by Step Task** | **D=During Grant A=After Grant** | **Date Begin** | **Date Due** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2.1 To support New Jersey Department of Education's effort to align PreK-K learning standards to *Common Core State Standards (CCSS)*- ELA and Math | D | July 2012 | September 2012 |
| 2.2 To support New Jersey Department of Education's analysis of recent mapping results | D | September 2012 | October 2012 |
| 2.3 To support New Jersey Department of Education's alignment of PreK standards to | D | September 2012 | October 2012 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Head Start's Standards | | | |
| 2.4 To support New Jersey Department of Education's draft of revised items for PreK-Grade 3 ELA and Mathematics | D | August 2012 | October 2012 |
| 2.5 To support New Jersey Department of Education's revision of PreK-K Standards to include Approaches to Learning | D | August 2012 | October 2012 |
| 2.6 Engage New Jersey Department of Education's graphic artist in creation of aligned document PreK | D | December 15, 2012 | December 15, 2012 |
| 2.7 To support New Jersey Department of Education's announcement of PreK-K standards draft that is posted online for feedback from stakeholders and expert reviewers | D | October 2012 | November 2012 |
| 2.8 To support New Jersey Department of Education's presentation on Birth-K standards to State Board of Education | D | November 2012 | December 2012 |
| 2.9 To integrate New Jersey Department of Education's adoption of *Common Core State Standards* for Grades 1-3 | D | January 2013 | February 2013 |
| 2.10 To engage New Jersey Department of Education's graphic artist in creation of Common Core document for Grades 1-3 | D | February, 15 2013 | April, 2013 |

| **Associated Costs by Task** | **2011-12** | **2012-13** | **2013-14** | **2014-15** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. By June, 2013, complete all phases of the *New Jersey Birth to Three Early Learning and Program Standards* design and implementation process | $19,000 | $29,500 | $5,000 | $0 |
| 2. By April 2013, revise the existing preschool standards to align with the *New Jersey Common Core Standards* for English Language Arts and Mathematics for grades K-3 to ensure appropriate teacher expectations for what children should know and be able to do | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Total Resources by Year** | **$19,000** | **$29,500** | **$5,000** | **$0** |

**Section 4. Workforce Preparation**

Early childhood professionals are one of the most important influences on young children's learning and development. Qualified practitioners who have had specialized training in child development and early education ensure that young children develop trust and security in themselves and their environments, help young children to learn how to engage with others in pro-social ways, and engage children in learning experiences that build on their emerging concepts and ideas of the world. It is also well documented that the quality of the leaders in an early childhood setting has a direct impact on the quality of that setting.

The Council's Workforce Preparation Committee is therefore proposing a number of strategies to create an aligned and articulated system of high quality professional development and preparation for those working in positions from entry level through leadership, and including higher education institutions. The aim is to improve the current professional development and preparation system so that content and offerings build on one another, and enable all members of the workforce to meaningfully participate in program improvement. This system of professional development and preparation is to be aligned with the state's career lattice and linked to improved compensation for individuals as they obtain higher levels of education and expertise.

Workforce preparation issues are central to all aspects of the broader quality improvement effort. Therefore, the work of the Workforce Committee is integrated into the state's Quality Rating and Improvement System, Grow NJ. Using the database developed through the New Jersey Registry, the Workforce Committee will communicate and share data files with the Coordinated Data Systems Committee so that current and accurate workforce data can be included in all reports on NJ's early childhood care and education system. The committee's work will also build on the efforts of the Learning and Development Standards Committee to ensure increased access and participation in the Infant/Toddler Credential. Moreover, the Coordinated and Targeted Outreach/Communication committee will be essential to the Workforce Committee as their efforts will help to advertise and communicate key workforce preparation initiatives as well as to help build a campaign to gain public support for increased compensation and recognition for the early childhood care and education workforce.

**Overall Goal:**

The primary goal of the Workforce Preparation Committee of the New Jersey Council for Young Children is to strengthen the preparation and ongoing professional development of all early care and education professionals working with children ages birth through age eight and to link

improvements in the knowledge and competencies of workforce members to increased compensation.

This goal brings together two areas of work specified under the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007: (a) ongoing professional development and (b) early education – higher education workforce preparation. Early childhood personnel are the most important influences on young children's learning and development outside of parents and other caregivers. Responsive practitioners who have had specialized training in early education ensure that young children develop trust and security in themselves and their environments, help young children to learn how to engage with others in pro-social ways, and engage children in learning experiences that build on their emerging concepts and ideas of the world. However, the early childhood workforce is also one of the lowest paid of professions, with many non-traditional learners who are inadequately prepared for the complexities of educating young children, and even those with qualifications may not have expertise specific to early care and education. For example, many leaders in the field may have bachelor's degrees or higher but in other disciplines or fields.

Overall Goals:

1. Map, evaluate, and improve the current system of professional development and preparation of those working with young children, ages birth to eight, in New Jersey so that no matter who is in the workforce there are accessible and high quality opportunities to improve credentials and on the job learning.
2. Revise and expand the state's core knowledge and competences to be inclusive of all members of the workforce.
3. Increase the numbers of credentialed early childhood and care practitioners and leaders in the state. Set benchmarks for the field, to be achieved within a certain time frame. These benchmarks must be linked to improvements in compensation in order to lead to a more knowledgeable and skilled workforce over time.
4. Implement a more comprehensive workforce registry to collect accurate and representative workforce data that can be used to inform improvements in the system and ensure an adequately qualified pipeline of early childhood practitioners and leaders.
5. Implement the use of a higher education inventory to assist with mapping and evaluating programs of practitioner and leadership preparation so that all participants in programs of preparation receive up-to-date early childhood content. Create an agreed upon set of names and definitions for common job roles in the field that link to the career lattice and workforce registry so that there is consistency across sectors.

**Background:**

The task of insuring that every child in the state of New Jersey, from birth to age eight, is taught by a well-prepared practitioner is restricted by several key challenges.

**Lack of an identifiable program of professional preparation**
Not all positions in the early childhood workforce have an identifiable program of professional preparation, whether through in-service professional development or a credentialing program at an institution of higher education, despite the research base that illustrates a positive relationship between practitioner preparation and improved child outcomes. For example, while New Jersey now has P-3 certification, there are no specialized programs for leadership preparation and we have only recently initiated an Infant/Toddler Credential.

**Limited access and continuity**
Accessing professional preparation no matter where one works in the field of early education is complicated by the lack of continuity between programs of professional preparation. Early childhood practitioners find it difficult to move between programs of preparation and professional development so that they can continuously build on and deepen their expertise. This continuity challenge is due, in part, to the lack of articulation agreements between institutions of higher education and the fact there is little coordination between those working in higher education and those who provide professional development outside of the higher education system. Both of these challenges -- access and continuity-- remain difficult to address because of the multiple agencies and individuals involved in the professional preparation and development of the early childhood workforce, and the absence of common core definitions and cross-agency policies to guide and coordinate professional development.

**Uneven quality of professional development and preparation**
Another challenge concerns the quality of the professional development and preparation available to those in the workforce. Early childhood professionals need to understand and address the mental health needs of young children, they need to know how to implement curriculum models and methods that contribute to children's learning of concepts and skills, and they must also be able to act responsively to the needs of an increasingly diverse student population. At the same time, learning and improving how to work with young children and their families is best achieved through opportunities for individuals to try ideas out in practice with an experienced coach and through collaborative and ongoing learning opportunities.

**Limited focus on preparation for working with dual language learners, children with special needs, and children with challenging behaviors**
While New Jersey has developed a number of programs of preparation and professional development, these programs have been found to be lacking in preparing practitioners to work with dual language learners, children with special needs, and children with behavioral issues, among others. Moreover, there is insufficient access to learning opportunities that are known to ensure improvements in practice (e.g. mentoring and coaching opportunities, professional learning communities). Again the issue of the quality of professional preparation and

development is exacerbated by the lack of coordination between those who provide professional learning opportunities for the workforce, resulting in replication, wasted resources, and under-educated practitioners.

**Uninformed, disparate approach**

Complicating all of these issues is the fact that measuring higher education and professional development opportunities and experiences for early childhood staff is complex. Policymakers and administrators lack tools that can help them make informed decisions about where to target limited resources. As a consequence, many professional development and preparation experiences operate in isolation from one another and with little regard for what the workforce needs or how particular programs and offerings might be delivered in more efficient ways.

**Inadequate compensation**

Finally, there is the issue of who comprises the early childhood workforce. The limited expectations of teaching staff in many sectors have led to early childhood work being one of the lowest paid of occupations. Many who work in the field are non-traditional students, mostly women from historically marginalized populations who have limited literacy skills. Even with a coordinated system of professional development and preparation, without attention to compensation and incentives to encourage current members of the workforce to improve their education and expertise, it will not be possible to build an ongoing pipeline of knowledgeable and expert practitioners. At the same time, many of those with higher qualifications working in the field may not have expertise specific to early care and education. Notwithstanding the fact, that some sectors compensate their workforce at a much higher rate than others so that without parity in salary and working conditions across all sectors it is difficult to retain qualified and knowledgeable staff.

**Next Steps:**

In order to address these issues, the Workforce Preparation Committee has undertaken several activities that will result in higher quality and better integrated professional development and higher education systems.

The next major tasks of the committee are summarized below.

1. Complete the mapping of the professional development systems and higher education offerings (Kipnis and Whitebook, 2012)
2. Pilot new Higher Education Inventory and help with development of analytic system to monitor higher education programs for early care and education workforce
3. Develop a means to collect representative data on the early care and education workforce in New Jersey
4. Improve the content and delivery of programs of professional development and preparation
5. Revise the core knowledge and competencies document

| 1. Complete the mapping of the professional development systems and higher education offerings | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Step by Step Task** | **D= During Grant A= After Grant** | **Date Begin** | **Date Due** |
| 1.1 Complete mapping of professional development providers and offerings | D | Sept 2011 | May 2012 |
| 1.2 Map early childhood practitioner and leader preparation programs in higher education | D | May 2012 | Feb 2013 |
| 1.3 Review the quality of content and delivery of programs of professional development and preparation for practitioners and leaders in early care and education settings | D | June 2012 | May 2013 |

| 2. Pilot new Higher Education Inventory and help with development of analytic system to monitor higher education programs for early childhood education workforce | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Step by Step Task** | **D= During Grant A= After Grant** | **Date Begin** | **Date Due** |
| 2.1 Use Higher Education Inventory with all 35 institutions of higher education identified in mapping | D | June 2012 | Dec 2012 |
| 2.2 Analyze data and write report indentifying strengths and limitations of current higher education system for preparing all members of the workforce and make policy recommendations | D | June 2012 | Dec 2012 |
| 2.3 Create different reporting formats targeted to key audiences (deans, faculty, policymakers) | D | June 2012 | Dec 2012 |

| 3. Develop a means to collect representative data on the early care and education workforce in New Jersey | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Step by Step Task** | **D= During Grant A= After Grant** | **Date Begin** | **Date Due** |
| 3. 1 Link Workforce Registry to Grow NJ data system | D | April 2012 | Ongoing |
| 3.2 Begin Workforce Registry registration drive at local CCR&Rs and Family Success Centers | D | | |
| 3.3 Make registry mandatory, including language in DHS contracts and DOE regulations, and add a “shut out” mechanism to the registry for participants who do not register/update information regularly | D | Sept 2012 | Aug 2013 |

| 4. Improve the content and delivery of programs of professional development and preparation for early childhood leaders in public and private settings | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Step by Step Task** | **D= During Grant A= After Grant** | **Date Begin** | **Date Due** |
| 4.1 Expand requirements and learning opportunities | D/A | Jan 2013 | Ongoing |
| 4.2 Improve articulation and alignment across and between professional development providers and New Jersey institutions of higher education | A | Sept 2013 | May 2014 |
| 4.3 Design a mechanism to improve the communication and connections among the various components of New Jersey professional development system | A | Sept 2013 | May 2014 |

| 5. Revise the core knowledge and competencies document | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Step by Step Task** | **D= During Grant A= After Grant** | **Date Begin** | **Date Due** |
| 5.1 Design a format and expand content areas in partnership with PINJ and Workforce Preparation Committee | D | Nov 2011 | Dec 2012 |
| 5.2 Develop "common terms" for the early childhood workforce that can be used across sectors | D | Nov 2011 | Dec 2012 |

| **Associated Costs by Task** | **2011-12** | **2012-13** | **2013-14** | **2014-15** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.1 Complete mapping of Professional Development providers and offerings | $26,448 | | | |
| 1.2 Mapping of early childhood practitioner and leader preparation programs in higher education | | $22,594 | | |
| 1.3 Review the quality of content and delivery of programs of professional development and preparation for practitioners and leaders in early care and education settings | | $22,594 | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2. Pilot new Higher Education Inventory and help with development of analytic system state can use to monitor higher education programs for early childhood education workforce | | $33,000 | | |
| 3. Develop a means to collect representative data on the early care and education workforce in New Jersey | | $5,000 | | |
| 4. Engaging with key stakeholders to use the data and information collected so far on the early childhood workforce system | This task is under development. | | | |
| 5. Revising and expanding the New Jersey's core knowledge and competences to be inclusive of all members of the workforce | It is anticipated that this task will be completed by the Workforce Preparation Committee. | | | |
| **Total Resources by Year** | **$26,448** | **$83,188** | | |

## Section 5. Coordinated and Targeted Outreach /Communication

The Council is working toward putting tools in place to strengthen the early childhood workforce, to develop and implement statewide learning standards, to implement a statewide Quality Rating and Improvement System, Grow NJ, to raise quality in our early childhood programs, and to develop a coordinated data system that can answer questions about how our programs and children are doing and how programs can be improved. The Coordinated and Targeted Outreach/Communication Committee plays a central role in pulling all of this work together. The Committee will develop key messages around educating parents and the public about the advantages of a qualified workforce, the importance of program and learning standards in driving program quality and the benefits of Grow NJ.

**Overall Goals:**

The Coordinated and Targeted Outreach /Communication Committee, in collaboration with the other committees of the New Jersey Council for Young Children seeks to identify and improve services for infants, young children and families by coordinating outreach efforts across state agencies, school districts and community and faith based organizations. This group is also charged with finding ways to more meaningfully engage families in decision making roles around their children's education and care. The New Jersey Council for Young Children is expected to develop recommendations for increasing overall participation and engagement of children and families in existing federal, state, and local early care and education programs, with particular attention to children and families in underrepresented and special populations.

The Committee identified the following goals:

1. Identify and evaluate outreach strategies for underserved infants and young children
2. Identify outreach services and prioritize efforts to reach underserved infants and young children
3. Establish parent-led County Councils for Young Children to provide the New Jersey Council for Young Children with feedback on Grow NJ and the impact of the array of county level services for infants, young children, and their families.
4. Develop and carry out a public education campaign that conveys the importance of Grow NJ, early learning standards, workforce preparation and infancy and early childhood mental health, as well as the progress of the work of the Council

**Background:**

**To meet goals 1, and 2**, in 2011, the Improved and Targeted Outreach/Communication Committee entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the National Institute of Early Education Research (NIEER) to design and conduct a study of the type and efficacy of recruitment and outreach strategies, with a focus on underserved populations. Interviews were conducted with key stakeholders responsible for funding or regulating the targeted

services and programs for underserved populations to determine strategies and outcomes for outreach to specific populations. Additionally, other states were studied to identify best practices for outreach to underserved populations. After synthesizing the collective research, a protocol was developed to collaborate with intermediary agencies to identify early childhood programs to explore how services are provided to underserved populations. A cross-section of child care programs (infant/toddler, Early Head Start, Head Start, public and private preschool and family child care homes) were selected and interviewed. Common characteristics and best practices were identified for providing outreach services to underserved, high-risk populations.

These activities culminated in a report released in 2012, entitled, "More than Marketing: A New Jersey Study on Outreach to Underserved Populations" that includes identified strategies for reaching underserved populations in early childhood programs, current processes and procedures to reach underserved populations in New Jersey, and recommendations for optimizing recruitment and outreach efforts for early childhood services (available here: http://www.nj.gov/education/ece/njcyc/reports/MoreThanMarketing.pdf ). A list of recommendations was presented to the full Council and the public during the New Jersey Council for Young Children meeting in March 2012. See a summary of the recommendations in Appendix C.

As the Data Committee seeks to identify quality and access issues for at-risk children, the Coordinated and Targeted Outreach/Communication Committee seeks to ensure that families are taking advantage of available services. When a gap is identified in availability and access, strategies and recommendations developed by the Coordinated and Targeted Outreach/Communication Committee will inform a response to those unmet needs.

**To address goal 3**, the committee is recommending that parent-led County Councils for Young Children be established, as was proposed in New Jersey's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge application. This infrastructure would provide a means to engage with parents and stakeholders as Grow NJ is implemented. The County Councils will be parent-led to ensure that policies and services are meeting the needs of families.

"Empowered Participation" a 2004 book by Archon Fung, professor at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, highlights how local school councils serve to increase accountability between local officials and the communities they serve, help build social capital, and encourage low-income, minority parents to become more involved in their community. Most importantly, he found that local school councils have a positive impact on student achievement. (http://parentsacrossamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/LSCresearch2012.pdf)

Feedback from the County Councils will inform adjustments to the Grow NJ implementation and policies recommended by the New Jersey Council for Young Children.

**To address goal 4,** the New Jersey Council for Young Children website currently provides updates and information about early childhood education and care and the work of the Council to the early childhood community through the following means:

1. Reports completed by the Council and its committees are made available to enrich the public's understanding of Council's accomplishments and goals
2. For families that have access to the internet, a listserv has been set up so parents and community members can receive email updates concerning the Council's agenda and initiatives.
3. A seasonal newsletter is listed on the website and sent through the listserv to broadcast updates.
4. In addition to the Council's website, information concerning the importance of early childhood education can also be found on the New Jersey Department of Education's website, on the Division of Early Childhood Education's page (www.state.nj.us/education/ece).

**Next Steps:**

Goals 1 and 2: Identify, evaluate and prioritize outreach strategies

The Committee's next steps are to engage families to affirm the findings of the study, plan effective outreach strategies, and identify family members who would be willing to become leaders with us in this work. In this endeavor, the committee plans to conduct family focus groups in 2012. The goal of the focus groups is to gain the families' thoughts about the recommended outreach strategies presented in "More than Marketing: A New Jersey Study on Outreach to Underserved Populations". It is anticipated that six to ten focus groups will be conducted regionally throughout the state. Estimated costs total $17,500, which will be used to contract with a consultant who has expertise in leading focus groups, develop an interview protocol, conduct the focus groups, and cover a variety of costs associated with hosting the focus groups.

The committee plans to synthesize the findings gathered from the focus groups with the strategies recommended in the commissioned report to highlight those strategies supported by the families. This information will serve as the basis for the development of an outreach toolkit for community providers in 2013. This toolkit will provide basic resources to providers serving young children to improve upon their ability to effectively reach and engage families who are not currently served by these providers, and will inform providers about the resources for families in their location. As with all Council activities, special care will be taken to ensure practices outlined in the toolkit are inclusive, as well as accommodate New Jersey's linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds. Estimated costs for toolkit development stand at $40,300. This amount includes costs of hiring a Project Manager to facilitate the overall development, and a Media Consultant to collaborate in the design, development and distribution elements of the outreach toolkit.

The toolkit will be provided to members of the parent-led County Councils to be utilized as a resource to further engage families in Council activities. Providers will be invited to regional technical assistance meetings to obtain the toolkit and will also receive guidance on how it can be utilized. An additional cost of $6,800 is anticipated to cover the costs of these regional technical assistance meetings. After an initial trial period, feedback will be collected about the toolkit's efficacy. This will be carried out by the Project Manager. Costs for this are included in the initial contract amount. Lastly, key materials will be selected for translation into the predominant languages spoken in New Jersey. The additional costs associated with translation are estimated at $17,500.

The revised toolkit will be distributed to providers and school-based preschools throughout the state in order to support improved outreach efforts to underserved populations.

Goal 3: Engage families through parent-led Councils

The first year of implementation of the parent-led Councils will be conducted in Cumberland County. Once the formation of the Cumberland Council has been well established, the Councils will be replicated statewide. Cumberland was chosen due to its available resources, such as Family Success Centers, and their ability to provide training and technical assistance for County Council members. Additional counties will be added as resources are available. County Council will establish the following subcommittees:

- Parent leadership – assess and address parents' leadership training needs
- School Readiness – work with the Family Success Centers and Head Start/Early Head Start Family Service staff to provide feedback on the benchmarks for kindergarten readiness
- Resource Development – ensure appropriate agencies are connecting with parents
- Steering – provide strategic direction and prioritize Council projects
- Public Relations/Communication – share Council information and progress with the local community and ensure opportunities for public input
- By-laws – address attendance policy and membership responsibilities
- Nominations – assess gaps in community representation and expertise on Council committees and recruit new members accordingly
- Finance – secure ongoing funding for the Council

The estimated start-up cost of the parent-led Council is $60,000 which should cover the costs of hiring a staff member to facilitate and provide support to the developing Council.

Goal 4: Develop and carryout public education campaign

The next step to build public awareness will be to develop a strategic communications plan that integrates a communication effort for each Council committee. To accomplish this task, a media consultant will be identified to design a public education campaign. A Request for

Proposal (RFP) will be completed to identify the appropriate consultant. Additionally, key messages will be developed and Council members will be selected to receive media training to act as Council spokespersons during the public campaign. Finally, a checklist will be developed to evaluate the appropriateness of the communication materials produced by the Council for diverse audiences including families, educators, community leaders and legislators.

Costs to complete this task are estimated to cost approximately $100,000 and include allocations for the following:

- The design and implementation of the Grow NJ communication and marketing plan in coordination with the CCR&Rs;
- The implementation of the learning and development standards dissemination plan;
- Distribution of the results of the higher education survey; and
- A general Council communication effort.

There are four main tasks associated with accomplishing these next steps:

1. Conduct Family Focus Groups – approximately 6-10 focus groups
2. Develop Outreach Toolkit for Community Members
3. Establish parent-led County Councils for Young Children
4. Develop and carryout public education campaign

1. Conduct Family Focus Groups – approximately 6-10 focus groups

| **Step by Step Task** | D=During Grant<br>A= After Grant | Start Date | End Date |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1.1 Develop scope of work to cover overall strategy and interview protocol | D | Apr 2012 | Sept 2012 |
| 1.2 Select contractor / consultant | D | July 2012 | Sept 2012 |
| 1.3 Identify participants and conduct focus groups | D | Sept 2012 | Nov 2012 |
| 1.4 Synthesize the findings with the recommended strategies in the report to highlight those supported by the families in the focus groups | D | Dec 2012 | Jan 2012 |

2. Develop Outreach Toolkit for Community Members

| Step by Step Task | D=During Grant A= After Grant | Start Date | End Date |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2.1 Identify and contract with Project Manager to develop Outreach toolkit for community members | D | Jan 2013 | Sept 2013 |
| 2.2 Identify and contract with Media Consultant to work in collaboration with Council Outreach and Communication Team to frame toolkits for distribution | D | June 2013 | Sept 2013 |
| 2.3 Invite providers to regional meetings to obtain the toolkit and technical assistance | D/A | Oct 2013 | Jan 2014 |
| 2.4 Collect information about the Outreach Toolkit's efficacy | A | Feb 2014 | Apr 2014 |
| 2.5 Select materials for translation into predominant languages spoken in New Jersey | A | Apr 2014 | Apr 2015 |

| 3. Establish parent-led County Councils for Young Children | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Step by Step Task** | D=During Grant A= After Grant | Start Date | End Date |
| 3.1 Finalize the plan for establishing the County Councils | D | Feb 2012 | Aug 2012 |
| 3.2 Identify Project Manager | D | Sept 2012 | Oct 2012 |
| 3.3 Plan for the first meeting in Cumberland County | D | Dec 2012 | Mar 2013 |
| 3.4 Recruit members | D | Dec 2012 | Mar 2013 |
| 3.5 Identify Council committees | D | Mar 2013 | June 2013 |
| 3.6 Identify agencies for support and expertise | D | Mar 2013 | June 2013 |

| 4. Develop and carryout a public education campaign that conveys the importance of Grow NJ, early learning standards, workforce preparation and infancy and early childhood mental health | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Step by Step Task** | D=During Grant A= After Grant | Start Date | End Date |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4.1 Create Request for Proposal (RFP) to contract with entity to support the communication effort of each Council committee generally and specifically. See the following sections:<br>• Program Improvement (Grow NJ) 4.1-4.5, 5.5<br>• Learning and Development Standards 1.2 and 1.7<br>• Workforce Preparation 2.3 | D | Sept 2012 | Sept 2014 |
| 4.2 Develop a checklist for publication to ensure the use of different modalities and accessibilities of materials | D | Sept 2012 | Dec 2012 |

| **Associated Costs by Task** | **2011-12** | **2012-13** | **2013-14** | **2014-15** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Contract with entity to develop interview protocol and conduct family focus groups; the results of which will assist in planning future outreach activities and recommendations | | $17,500 | | |
| 2.1 Contract with Project Manager to facilitate tool kit development | | | $17,500 | |
| 2.2 Contract with Media Consultant to facilitate toolkit design and distribution | | | $16,000 | |
| 2.3 Convene regional Council meetings to provide toolkit and technical assistance to providers | | | $6,800 | |
| 2.4 Collect information about toolkit's effectiveness | | | | |
| 2.5 Select materials for translation into predominant languages spoken in New Jersey | | | | $17,500 |
| 3.0 Establish parent-led Councils | | $60,000 | | |
| 4.1 Request for Proposal (RFP) to develop and carryout public education campaign:<br>• Program Improvement(Grow NJ)<br>• Learning and Development Standards<br>• Workforce Preparation<br>• Key message development and general communication alignment | | $38,000<br>$10,000<br>$19,000<br>$33,000 | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Total Resources by Year** | | **$177,500** | **$40,300** | **$17,500** |

**Section 6: Infancy and Early Childhood Mental Health Committee**

This newly formed committee was proposed at the March 2012 Council meeting in response to the growing interest and need to address infant and early childhood mental health services as part of a comprehensive, coordinated system. While several notable initiatives and programs are underway in various state agencies and organizations, the Council voted to establish a separate committee to address the importance of early childhood mental health services based on national best practice models and to build the capacity of existing services to support the social/emotional needs of New Jersey's children birth to age eight.

The work of the committee will help to fill a gap in infancy and early childhood mental health resources, and will establish a system that connects providers across all settings with access to research-based information and strategies for supporting the mental health of infants and young children. Participants in the state's Quality Rating and Improvement System, Grow NJ, will now have access to this critical training and support.

**Overall Goals:**

1. To improve the current system of infant and early childhood mental health service delivery and consultation through capacity building in the field and through the mapping of services to early childhood centers and practitioners
2. To adopt the Michigan's Association for Infant Mental Health Consultant Competency Guidelines and Endorsement for New Jersey
3. To promote adoption and integration of the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) Pyramid Model through the three regional New Jersey First Steps Infant/Toddler Initiative Programs
4. To develop an intensive training and mentorship program for the creation of 6 Infant-Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants who will be deployed through the three regional New Jersey First Steps Infant/Toddler Initiative Programs
5. To create opportunities for sharing best practices and reflections about what is needed to effectively support New Jersey's infants' and young children's social and emotional needs-whether it be one child, a group of children in family child care, an entire classroom, or the professionals working with young children across multi-interdisciplinary fields and initiatives

**Background:**

According to the National Research Council and Institute of Medicine 2000 report (Shonkoff and Phillips, 2000) young children's healthy social and emotional development is critical to school readiness and positive long-term outcomes. The report also confirms the dramatic increase in the rate of preschool expulsion due to challenging behaviors. Early childhood

professionals frequently raise the issues of how to deal with challenging behaviors and emotional distress in the classroom. The field of early childhood mental health consultation recognizes that achieving positive social and emotional outcomes for young children requires a comprehensive and collaborative approach across interdisciplinary fields that have various components: prevention, assessment, intervention, and treatment.

Infant and early childhood mental health is concerned with the optimal physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of the young child (birth through eight years old) within the context of his/her family. The field addresses the capacity of infants and children to self-regulate, experience the full range of human emotions, engage in loving, reciprocal relationships, represent the world in thought and language, engage in shared emotional thinking and relatedness, become intimate and care for others interdependently, and engage in productive activities. It also investigates and honors the relationships that are considered crucial to the child's neurological, physical, emotional, and social development which are the foundation for all later developmental progress.

Costa (1996, 2006) has summarized guiding principles in the field of infant mental health, and Greenspan and Wieder (2006) note the central importance of affective development. Brazelton and Greenspan (2000) and Greenspan (2002), further establish the critical importance of emotional security in the unfolding developmental progress of infants and children. With regard to early childhood mental health consultation, the Center for Child and Human Development at Georgetown University issued a seminal report in August 2009 on effective early childhood mental health consultation programs, promoting the notion that all infant and early care education programs must integrate mental health considerations (Duran et al., 2009).

Costa (2006) identified three critical domains in program and staff development related to enhancing infant and early childhood mental health:

1. The integration of principles and practices of infant and early childhood mental health into all educational, service, policy and advocacy programs
2. The implications and applications of relationship-based intervention
3. The critical importance of reflective practices in all educational and service programs

The field of infant and early childhood mental health has grown significantly in the past 25 years. Advances and research in the neurosciences have revealed the critical ways in which the earliest emotional relationships "sculpt" the infant brain and the ways in which adverse experiences and trauma have deleterious effects on the structure and function of the brain (e.g., Perry, 2006; Adverse Childhood Experiences studies/CDC). Additionally, both in New Jersey and throughout the United States, there are an increasing number of service and educational programs dedicated to promotion, prevention, and intervention in the lives of infants, children, and families. These include federally and state-mandated Part C Early Intervention programs for infants and children, birth to three years, with developmental

disabilities; a wide range of infant and early childhood home-visitation programs (e.g., Nurse-Family Partnership, Healthy Families, Parents-as-Teachers, Parent-Child Home, Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters -HIPPY); Office of Head Start (OHS) funded home-based and center-based Early Head Start programs; and increasing numbers of infant and child preschool programs.

Additionally, there are public and privately sponsored preschool programs, including education-funded Part B services for children aged 3-5 years with special education needs. The staff in these programs are currently required to engage in professional development programs and in some cases are trained in specific curricula. Professional development in infant and early childhood mental health, ongoing mentorship and the importance of "reflective practices" at all staff levels are consistent with these program goals. Furthermore, the existence of a formal professional certification process would create a cadre of professionals into a broader community of practice. The staff in all such programs are in great need of understanding how early experiences influence development in all domains and, in particular, how socio-emotional development is critically linked to educational, interpersonal, social and employment success. The Center for the Social and Emotional Foundations of Early Learning (CSEFEL) advocates the "Pyramid Model" with social and emotional development as the foundation of all early learning.

In the field of behavioral health services and infant/early childhood consultation, there is an enormous shortage of staff trained in assessment and therapeutic interventions for infants, children, and families with early developmental, emotional and relational difficulties. They often encounter infants, children and families with specific circumstances that require specialized knowledge and skill including children who have been exposed to violence, encountered multiple disruptions in early attachments, or encountered adverse experiences including child abuse and neglect. Military families with young children experience a set of unique challenges and operate as a unique culture with traditions, rituals, values and beliefs associated with each branch of service with which many civilian providers are not familiar. Providers supporting National Guard/Reserves and veteran families also need to know about the specific stresses, traumas and family issues related to these children and families. Similarly, families as a whole have relational stressors such as parental substance abuse, parental mental illness, family violence, disease or incarceration, and the lingering effects of complex trauma and multi-generational poverty also requiring specialized knowledge and skill that this certificate program will impart.

Capacity building in this field addresses this long recognized paucity of well-trained and available practitioners to serve as providers, trainers, mentors and consultants. The following five goals would aim to create capacity in addressing core "domains of knowledge" in the field:

- Learning about the science of infancy and early childhood development
- Investigating discipline-relevant assessment and intervention strategies

- Understanding the critical importance of integrating mental health principles, relationship-based strategies and reflective practices into service delivery systems with infants, children and families
- Acquiring the skills required to influence policies that impact the mental health of children
- Understanding and applying knowledge from the neurosciences and research about the core role that emotions and socio-emotional development play in brain development and the capacities for self-regulation, social relationships, intellectual development, language and shared human development
- Learning the skills required to become change agents to influence policies that impact the mental health of children and families
- Developing applications for use within the scope of each professional's certificate, licensure and practice

**Current Status:**

- New Jersey has several initiatives and organizations that are working on issues of professional development and capacity building. These include: the New Jersey Association for Infant Mental Health, the YCS Institute for Infant and Preschool Mental Health, the Coalition of Infant/Toddler Educators (CITE), the New Jersey Alliance for Social, Emotional and Character Development, New Jersey Focus on Early Emotional Learning and Support (NJ-FEELS), and the newly established Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health at Montclair State University. In addition, a number of programs and initiatives provide professional development, advocacy and policy development including, the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN), Advocates for Children of New Jersey (ACNJ), the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Initiative (NJ Parent Link), Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey (PCANJ), NJ BUILD and other groups.
- The Coalition of Infant/Toddler Educators (CITE) established the New Jersey Infant/Toddler Credential, which has a strong infant mental health focus that includes 120 hours of professional development and six college credits. Through a partnership with Professional Impact New Jersey, 10 community colleges and 2 four-year institutions of higher education offer the coursework on infant mental health. The Infant/Toddler Credential is currently being reviewed for updating and revisions and may include a focus on military and veteran families with young children.
- The state has taken leadership in funding three regional "New Jersey First Steps Infant/Toddler Initiative" programs to promote greater attention to the specialized needs of infants and young children, and promotion of the Infant/Toddler Credential developed by Coalition of Infant/Toddler Educators (CITE) and administered by Professional Impact New Jersey, (PINJ).
- The New Jersey State Early Intervention System, Part C, has established a workgroup dedicated to enhancing staff training in socio-emotional development and the integration of socio-emotional goals in Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP).

- Between 2005 and 2007, Professional Impact New Jersey (PINJ) and the YCS Institute for Infant and Preschool Mental Health hosted several multi-day, intensive "train-the-trainer" series. This series explained the Infant Mental Health component of the Infant/Toddler Credential to over 80 trainers/consultants in order to teach and coach practitioners on the principles of infant mental health with two cohorts in the Northern and Southern regions of the state.
- From 2002-2011, the YCS Institute for Infant and Preschool Mental Health offered a post-graduate certificate on infant mental health in partnership with Seton Hall University. (This is no longer offered).
- Beginning in the fall 2012, the Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health at Montclair State University will be offering a graduate 15 credit, "Graduate Certificate in Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health" that is aligned with the Michigan Association for Infant Mental Health Competency and Endorsement Guidelines.

**Next Steps:**
The following task is the foundation on which the Infancy and Early Childhood Mental Health Committee's main goal will be accomplished:

| 1. To promote infant and child mental health and the capacity for all systems to promote early childhood mental health and engage in prevention efforts, and assist in interventions when problems arise | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Step by Step Task** | **D= During Grant<br>A= After Grant** | **Date Begin** | **Date Due** |
| 1.1 Conduct a strategic planning retreat for all partners with the purpose of giving input into the goals and rationale of this committee and determine actions to create a comprehensive and collaborative system that supports children's social and emotional development in New Jersey, as well as program and staff capacities in promotion, prevention and intervention | D | October 2012 | May 2013 |
| 1.2 Mapping of early childhood mental health services, trainings, and consultants through a statewide survey | D | October 2012 | April 2013 |
| 1.3 Developing a mechanism, in conjunction with higher education, the New Jersey Association for Infant Mental Health, and other partners, for creating capacity in the field by training and mentoring existing early childhood consultants so they can be deployed into the classrooms, centers, and family child care settings that are facing high rates of | D/A | October 2012 | May 2013 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | challenging behaviors and emotional distress issues | | | |
| 1.4 | Adopt the Michigan Association for Infant Mental Health Competency Guidelines and Endorsement system, which identifies 4 levels of required training and credentialing in infant mental health | D/A | November 2012 | Jan 2013, and ongoing |
| 1.5 | The committee will work with New Jersey First Steps Infant/Toddler Initiative, New Jersey Association for Infant Mental Health (NJAIMH), New Jersey Focus on Early Emotional Learning and Support (NJ-FEELS), the CCR&Rs, Head Start, Coalition of Infant/Toddler Educators (CITE), Professional Impact New Jersey (PINJ) and other partners to promote training in and integration of the Pyramid Model into early care and education programs | D/A | November 2012 | ongoing |
| 1.6 | The committee will work with New Jersey First Steps Infant/Toddler Initiative, New Jersey Association for Infant Mental Health (NJAIMH), New Jersey Focus on Early Emotional learning and Support (NJ-FEELS), the CCR&Rs, Head Start, Coalition of Infant/Toddler Educators (CITE), Professional Impact New Jersey (PINJ) and other partners to promote training in and integration of the Pyramid Model into early care and education programs | D/A | January 2013 | Ongoing |
| 1.7 | Design a structure for an early childhood infant mental health comprehensive and collaborative system using existing structures such as the New Jersey Association for Infant Mental Health (NJAIMH), Coalition of Infant/Toddler Educators (CITE), New Jersey First Steps Infant/Toddler Initiative, CCR&Rs, and Head Start Mental Health Professionals | D/A | January 2013 | ongoing |
| 1.8 | Promote cultural relevance and attention to special populations such as military families, children with special needs, children in protective services care, English Language Learners, etc. | D/A | Ongoing | ongoing |

| **Associated Costs by Task** | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Task** | **2011-12** | **2012-13** | **2013-14** | **2014-15** |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.1 Conduct a strategic planning retreat for all partners with the purpose of giving input into the goals and rationale of this committee and determine actions to create a comprehensive and collaborative system that supports children's social and emotional development in New Jersey, as well as program and staff capacities in promotion, prevention and intervention | | $3,500 | | |
| 1.2 To improve the current system of infancy and early childhood mental health service delivery and consultation through capacity building in the field, and through the mapping of services to early childhood centers and practitioners | | $10,000 | $1,500 | $1,500 |
| 1.3 To adopt the Michigan's Association for Infant Mental Health Competency Guidelines and Endorsement for New Jersey, and fund it for year 2 (start-up) to launch the administration and implementation of the competencies and endorsement process (Revenue offset in years 3-5) | | $5,000<br>$51,000<br>$20,000 | $20,000 | $20,000 |
| 1.4 In conjunction with the acquisition of Michigan's Association for Infant Mental Health Competency Guidelines and Endorsement, engage in a comprehensive development of curriculum to meet the standards for Levels 1 through 4, through engagement of national, regional, and local partners, the New Jersey Association for Infant Mental Health (NJAIMH), the Montclair State University-Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health | | $20,000 | $2,500 | $2,500 |
| 1.5 To promote adoption and integration of the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) Pyramid Model through three regional New Jersey First Steps Infant/Toddler | | $7,500 | $3,000 | $3,000 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Initiative programs, CCR&Rs, New Jersey Association for Infant Mental Health (NJAIMH) and other providers. | | | | |
| 1.6 | To develop an intensive training and mentorship program for the creation of 6 Infant-Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants for deployment through the three regional New Jersey First Steps Infant/Toddler Initiative programs | | $7,000 | $3,000 | $3,000 |
| **Total Resources by Year** | | | **$124,000** | **$30,000** | **$30,000** |

Budget Notes: This committee plans to seek outside sources of funding to support many of the tasks listed below.

TASK

(1.1) Marketing, facility and consultant costs for strategic planning retreat

(1.2) Cost for design, administration and analysis of a statewide survey instrument to assess the current status of infant and early childhood mental health specialists in the state, within mental health and across allied multidisciplinary domains. Year 2 represents initial survey estimate. Years 3-5, represent costs for annual updates

(1.3) Costs for Michigan Association for Infant Mental Health Endorsement:

- Year 2 is for outreach and marketing and initial 3-year license ($40,000), training and technical assistance/consultant costs ($9,000), scoring fee ($1,000), and annual endorsement revision ($1,000). Year 2 also includes allocations towards the purchase of materials associated with training needed for the endorsement. development of training curriculum.
- Years 2- 5, includes $20,000 as funding towards year 2 start-up costs for the New Jersey Association for Infant Mental Health, towards administration of the endorsement system, the cost basis for which includes a part-time administrator, secretarial support and materials/supplies. In-kind support from collaborating agencies as well as supplemental funding from allied state departments (e.g., DCF, DOH) and private foundations will be sought. Years 3-5 will be supported by fees generated by applicants to the endorsement process. (1.4) Costs are allocated for New Jersey's leadership and professional services in convening a multi-state task force, with funding contributions from allied colleagues from

other states to develop a comprehensive curriculum that will meet the standards for levels 1-4.

- (1.5) Costs are for annual fees for trainers from the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) and in-state personnel, to be supplemented through participant fees.
- (1.6) Costs are for training and consultation fees in conjunction with CCR&Rs and other state entities, to be supplemented through participant fees.

**Status and Recommendations in Brief by Committee Area**

**Program Improvement (Grow NJ)**

- Professionally format scales
- 60-site instrument validation study (Rutgers Camden)
- RFP electronic Grow NJ to create system in Spring 2013
- Test-drive each component to inform infrastructure, TA system, incentives, and rating processes
- Rollout one region at a time
- Ultimately build into the DCF licensing system (License Step 1, License Step 2, etc.)

**Coordinated Data Systems**

- Mapped the state's data systems
- Generated 13 data questions
- Plan for connecting data systems

**Learning and Development Standards**

- Birth to Three Early Learning Standards developed
- Field test of Birth to Three Early Learning Standards
- Rollout Birth to Three Early Learning Standards
- Plan for revision of Preschool Standards to align with New Jersey Common Core and Head Start Child Development & Early Learning Framework

**Workforce Preparation**

- Mapped PD systems for early childhood practitioners
- Recommending required participation in Workforce Registry
- Pilot higher education inventory to get better info about workforce prep
- Modify core knowledge and competency framework for birth to eight
- Align early childhood PD systems

**Improved Family Outreach/Communication**

- Studied current outreach efforts to underserved populations and made recommendations
- Conduct family focus groups to fine-tune recommendations
- Build system linkages between community-based services and child care providers (e.g. Home Visiting, Family Success Centers)
- Develop local parent-led early childhood councils
- Create outreach toolkit for providers
- Develop and carryout public education campaign

**Infancy and Early Childhood Mental Health**

- Recommendations around increasing capacity to address mental health needs of families with infants and young children
- Adopt Michigan's Infant Mental Health Consultant Competency Guidelines and Endorsement
- Promote strategies from the Center for Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL/Positive Behavior Support)
- Support expansion of evidence-based home visiting models that promote positive parent-child

interaction and integrate mental health strategies

**Summary of New Jersey Council for Young Children Expenditures During Grant Period (DGP) and Post Grant Period (PGP)**

| Budget Projections by Council Committee | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 (DGP) | 2013-14 (PGP) | 2014-15 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Coordinated Data Systems | $0 | $0 | $0 | $100,000 | $111,780 |
| Learning and Development Standards | $0* | $10,750* | $5,000 | $0 | $0 |
| Workforce Preparation | $0* | $38,000* | $0 | $0 | $0 |
| Improved Family Outreach/Communication | $0 | $177,500 | $40,300 | $0 | $17,500 |
| Infancy and Early Childhood Mental Health | $6,000 | $87,000 | $32,000 | $190,100 | $120,500 |
| **TOTALS** | **$6,000** | **$313,250** | **$77,300** | **$290,100** | **$249,780** |

*Totals do not match committee sections above in cases where project costs are already included in an existing contract or MOU.

To date, existing Council projects account for approximately $1,159,436 of the $1,758,511 in Council grant funding (leaving approximately $599,075). To accomplish their main goals, additional projects for the Standards, Workforce, Outreach, and Mental Health committees (described in the sections above) are expected to need another $396,550 in grant funding by the end of the grant period ($6,000 in 2011-12; $313,250 in 2012-13; and $77,300 before the end of the grant period in 2013-14). To accomplish the specific tasks set out by the above committees after the grant period, the Council will need approximately $290,100 in additional funding in 2013-14 and $249,780 in additional funding in 2014-15.

With the remaining grant funding not being used in the above projects ($202,525), the Council plans to implement a Grow NJ trial in a small number of programs. While the exact nature of the trial is being determined by the Program Improvement Committee and Inter Department Group, the council funding may be used to cover the following:

- Development of a Training of Trainers on each component
- Rating system development and implementation
- Curriculum and assessment training
- Funds for program improvements

Beyond Fiscal Year 2015, several of the projects identified by the Council committees will require on-going funding (e.g., a permanent staff person to oversee the coordinated data systems project). It is possible that costs for some of the on-going projects may be funded by repurposing or redirecting existing state funding intended for similar purposes. Grow NJ is central to the Council's strategic plan to improve the quality and coordination of programs and services across New Jersey. Statewide implementation of Grow NJ will require a significant commitment of resources and funding. The Inter Department Planning Group and the Council's Program Improvement (Grow NJ) Committee are working together to address resource coordination and challenges.

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**Appendix A**
**Members of the New Jersey Council for Young Children**

| Name/Title | Affiliation |
|---|---|
| Ellen Wolock, Administrator | NJ Department of Education<br>Division of Early Childhood Education |
| Lakota Kruse, MD, Director Maternal and Child Health | NJ Department of Health<br>Division of Family Health Services |
| Shonda Laurel, Supervising Program Development Specialist | NJ Department of Human Services<br>Division of Family Development |
| Laura Morana, Superintendent | Red Bank Borough School District |
| Tina Foley, Supervisor | Catholic Charities, Diocese of Metuchen |
| Alice Rose, Director, Child Development Center | McGuire Air Force Base, NJ |
| Sharon Ryan, Associate Professor | Rutgers, the State University of NJ<br>Graduate School of Education |
| Ana Berdecia, Senior Fellow/Director | Thomas Edison State College |
| Ted Gooding, President/CEO | O.C.E.A.N. Inc. |
| Suzanne Burnette, Head Start Collaboration Director | NJ Department of Education<br>Division of Early Childhood Education |
| Lisa Von Pier,<br>Director | NJ Department of Children and Families<br>Division of Prevention & Community Partnerships |
| Barbara Kiley, Former President, CITE | Coalition of Infant/Toddler Educators, CITE |
| Barbara Reisman, Executive Director | Schumann Fund |
| Cecilia Zalkind, Executive Director | Association for the Children of New Jersey |
| Lisa Lockwood, President | NJ Association for the Education of Young Children |
| Veronica Ray, President | NJ Head Start Association |
| Lorraine Johnson, President | NJ Head Start Director's Association |
| Michelle Melgarejo, President | NJ Family Child Care Provider Association |
| Gerard Costa, Director | Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health at Montclair State University |
| Lansing Davis, Ed.D. Senior Policy Analyst | NJ State Employment and Training Commission |
| Natasha Johnson, Deputy Director | NJ Department of Human Services, Division of Family Development |
| Gary Sefchik, Chief | NJ Department of Children and Families, Office of Licensing |
| Barbara Tkach, 619 Coordinator | NJ Department of Education<br>Office of Special Education Programs |
| Margaret Milliner, Assistant Director | NJ Department of Human Services |

| | |
|---|---|
| | Division of Family Development |

**Appendix B**

**New Jersey Council for Young Children Committee Members**

| Coordinated Data Systems | Improved Outreach/ Communication | Learning and Development Standards | Workforce Preparation | Program Improvement/ QRIS (Grow NJ) | Infancy and Early Childhood Mental Health |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Karin Garver | *Tina Foley | *Laura Morana | *Ana Berdecia | * Suzanne Burnette | *Gerard Costa |
| *Janet Parrotta | *Lisa von Pier | Kathleen Priestley | *Sharon Ryan | *Cecilia Zalkind | *Amanda Blagman |
| Lakota Kruse | Ted Gooding | Elmoria Thomas | Susan Bruder | Ellen Wolock | Suzanne Burnette |
| Kim Boller | Tonia Davis | Terri Buccarelli | Terri Buccarelli | Gerard Costa | Ana Berdecia |
| Tina Foley | Renee Cogan | Stacey Salley-Proctor | Ramata Choma | Bonnie Eggenburg | Barbara Kiley |
| Ellen Wolock | Denise Bouyer | Barbara Kiley | Patricia Hall | Shonda Laurel | Shonda Laurel |
| Nicole Hellriegel | Sunday Gustin | Nezzie De Frank | Anita Kumar | Beth Gardiner | Ellen Wolock |
| Mary Jane Di Paolo | Lansing Davis | Lisa Lockwood | Barbara Kiley | Daniel Hart | Keri Giordano |
| Mary Manning-Falzarano | Brenda O'Shea | Beverly Lynn | Arlene Martin | Theresa Caputo | Kaitlin Mulchahy |
| Margaret Milliner | Toni Callas | *Arlene Martin | Holly Seplocha | Gary Sefchik | Kathy Mulrooney |
| Michele Safrin | Monica Townsend | Elaine Bogoloff | Nancy Thomson | Lorraine Cooke | Diane Restaino |
| Sunday Gustin | Lorraine Johnson | Cathy Joseph | Sue Williamson | Amanda Blagman | Patricia Taliaferro |
| Barbara Tkach | Shonda Laurel | Alice Rose | Regina Adesanya | Lalita Boykin | Edna Pomrink |
| | Nancy Parello | Jennifer Santana | Lisa Lockwood | Eileen Howell-Lee | Rasel Palmer |
| | *Barbara Reisman | Shonda Laurel | Dana Berry | Veronica Ray | Diane Squadron |
| | | Pat Mennuti | Cynthia Rice | Alice Rose | Lorri Sullivan |
| | | Linda Gillespie | Gerard Costa | Ellen Frede | Sunday Gustin |
| | | Kathleen Mulrooney | Mary Manning-Falzarano | | |
| | | Dianne Stetson | | | |
| | | Michelle Keenan | | | |
| | | Barbara Pittman | | | |
| | | Karen Melzer | | | |

| Coordinated Data Systems | Improved Outreach/ Communication | Learning and Development Standards | Workforce Preparation | Program Improvement/ QRIS (Grow NJ) | Infancy and Early Childhood Mental Health |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Meg Saunders | | | |
| | | Sue Williamson | | | |
| | | Joann Vesay | | | |
| | | Sonja De Groot Kim | | | |
| | | Diana Autin | | | |
| | | Amanda Blagman | | | |
| | | Lynn Troianelli | | | |
| | | Gail Roberts | | | |
| *Chair or Co-Chair | | | | | |

## Appendix C

### Summary of Findings from More than Marketing:
### A New Jersey Study on Outreach to Underserved Populations Ages Birth to Five

Recommendations for Early Childhood Education Providers

**Strengthening Public Education and Social Marketing**

- Target mailings and local advertising in places frequented by the target population. (ads in newspapers, radio, internet, schools, grocery stores, college financial aid offices, employer paychecks, health/social service agencies, child birth education classes, hospitals, prenatal/pediatric physicians' offices/clinics)
- Go where the population goes--face to face meetings.
- Use "trusted messengers" from the community, including parent volunteers and cultural brokers.
- Include military service on applications and provide support/referrals for family if needed.
- Utilize Procedures and Practices that are Welcoming to Targeted Populations
- Co-locate services (health screenings, parent education, literacy) and provide referrals to community services.
- Provide technical assistance at the local level to help families access services at different points of entry and meet varying eligibility requirements.
- Ensure that all agencies serving families are knowledgeable about opportunities for support for targeted populations in their communities.

**Services that Focus on Children's Success**

- Set high expectations while paying attention to basic developmental, personal and social needs.
- Set high quality standards and focus on long term results.

**Valuing Staff and Promoting Staff Development**

- Participate in cross training with various systems (early intervention, special education, child welfare).
- Link increase in salary to training hours.

**Engaging and Supporting Families**

- Promote shared leadership and partnerships with parents/families.
- Use early childhood Strengthening Families Framework to engage and serve families.

**Local Collaboration and Coordination to Better Serve Target Populations**

- Participate in county, regional and/or state advisory councils.
- Educate others on the value of early childhood education.

**Policy Recommendations**

- Create a uniform definition of "underserved, high risk" populations and provide guidance for priorities for enrollment when there is a waiting list.
- Promote cross agency training for providers who serve young children (child care, Head Start, school districts, Early Intervention, Child Welfare, DoD Child Development Centers, VA family services, etc).
- Integrate New Jersey's expanding network of evidence-based home visitation programs into the system for early childhood education.
- Recognize and support the role of family child care programs in caring for underserved and high risk populations.
- Establish common standards for quality—support statewide QRIS efforts, promote the Head Start and National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Multicultural Principles, and early childhood Strengthening Families Framework. Recognize military culture as one of the cultural elements considered under these principles.
- Issue joint statements from Head Start, child care and public pre-kindergarten administrators which emphasize the importance of blending services and funding at the local level.
- Help providers identify underserved populations and design programs to meet the needs of those children, through training, partnerships with community organizations, and technical assistance.
- Develop a single application process for multiple services.

<u>State Level Data Concerns</u>

- Develop a big picture view of New Jersey's early childhood needs and services that integrates local, intermediary and state data for underserved populations.
- Request and analyze data from early childhood intermediaries (across departments) to more accurately identify gaps in services and target population needs.
- Develop relationships with DoD and Veterans Affairs to include strategies which would include military families with young children.
- Improve local/regional data collection to better understand how target populations are being served and identify gaps in services. Use state agencies and intermediaries to provide needed technical assistance on attaining better demographic data on children, families, and the early childhood workforce.
- Create a technology based information system that provides for the transfer of child education and health information among programs and schools as they work together to support positive child outcomes.
- Create reports on services to share with key stakeholders in government, private foundations and/or elected offices to discuss funding needs and more broadly promote family friendly policies and practices for outreach to high need populations.

Ensuring Adequate Funding Support

- Promote joint planning and pool funding across departments. Provide technical assistance on successful partnerships and strategies for braiding funding.
- Provide funding incentives to foster early childhood collaborations.

**Appendix D**

**New Jersey Department of Children and Families**
**New Jersey Division of Prevention & Community Partnerships**
**Family Success Center/Head Start Pilot Project**

**DRAFT**

**Mission Statement**

Head Start and Family Success Centers partnering to promote lifelong family success

**Goals**

1. To sustain school readiness and school success beyond Head Start
2. To provide family support for family success

**Early Head Start and Head Start (HS):**

- Promotes the school readiness of children ages birth to five from low-income families
- Provides a learning environment that supports children's growth: language and literacy; cognition and general knowledge; physical development and health; social and emotional development; and approaches to learning.
- Provides comprehensive services including health, nutrition, social, and other services determined to be necessary by family needs assessments, in addition to education
- Responsive to each child and family's ethnic, cultural and linguistic heritage
- Emphasizes the role of parents as their child's first and most important teacher. Head Start programs build relationships with families that support:
    - family well-being and positive parent-child relationships;
    - families as learners and lifelong educators;
    - family engagement in transitions;
    - family connections to peers and community; and
    - families as leaders.
- Provides support services to pregnant women

**Family Success Centers(FSC):**

- Access to information on child, maternal and family health services and health insurance programs
- Development of "Family Success" plans, which address strengths and challenges and goals to address challenges which threaten to undermine family stability;
- Economic self-sufficiency / employment related services/income security services;
- Information & Referral Services (connection to off-site public and private resources);
- Life Skills training (budgeting, nutrition, etc.);
- Housing related services;
- Parent education and Parent-child activities;
- Support to families as they meet challenges such as children with special needs;

- Home visiting, consistent with the model of engagement approved by the Division of Prevention and Community Partnerships.

***Family Success Centers and Head Start will work together, hand-in-hand, to connect families to both programs ensuring that families are supported through their child's early years of development and into the later years of working toward school success. Through this partnership FSC and HS pledge to orient families to both programs, encourage involvement in the governance of each program, provide resources to families that help children achieve school success, and promote family involvement in the child's life, including fathers.***

**Family Success Center/Head Start Pilot Project Participants:** Burlington County Family Success Center, Burlington County Early Head Start and Head Start, Concerned Parents for Head Start, Inc., Gateway Early Head Start and Head Start, Holly City Help Family Success Center, NORWESCAP Early Head Start and Head Start, NORWESCAP Family Success Center, Straight and Narrow Family Success Center